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THE WHALEMEN'S MONUMENT

This statue by Bela L. Pratt stands near the entrance of the public library at New Bedford, Massachusetts.



The Academy Classics

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HERMAN MELVILLE

MOBY DICK

OR

THE WHITE WHALE

EDITED BY

EARL MALTBY BENSON

ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL, BOSTON



ALLYN AND BACON

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## FOREWORD

THE rapidly increasing interest in the history of whaling seems to justify the appearance of a school text that deals with this most interesting subject. No book is better adapted to serve this purpose than Herman Melville's whaling classic, *Moby Dick*. The best authorities agree that Melville has given us an account of whaling in its golden days that is both accurate and interesting.

In order to present the story as an interesting, readable narrative, it has been necessary to take certain liberties with the author's text. The original contains many long, uninteresting, philosophical digressions which would not be appreciated even by the majority of adult readers. All of these passages have been omitted without indication by asterisks. The large number of chapters, one hundred and thirty-five, also demanded revision. Wherever possible, short chapters have been combined, but in most instances the original titles have been retained. No changes, however, have been made in the author's phraseology.

In addition to the usual notes, questions, and topics for discussion, this edition includes a discussion of the book, a life of Melville, a glossary of nautical and whaling terms, diagrams of a whaler with a key to its rigging, a short sketch on the whaling industry, a few critical comments on the book and the author by students of Melville, and a list of books and articles concerning whaling.



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E. M. B.



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In token  
of my admiration for his genius  
this book is inscribed  
to

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE







# MOBY DICK

OR

## THE WHITE WHALE

### CHAPTER I

#### THE CARPET-BAG

CALL me Ishmael. Some years ago — never mind how long precisely — having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. I stuffed a shirt or two into my old carpet-bag, tucked it under my arm, and started for Cape Horn and the Pacific. Quitting the good city of old Manhatto, I duly arrived in New Bedford. It was on a Saturday night in December. Much was I disappointed upon learning that the little packet for Nantucket had already sailed, and that no way of reaching that place would offer, till the following Monday.

As most young candidates for the pains and penalties of whaling stop at this same New Bedford, thence to embark on their voyage, it may as well be related that I, for one, had no idea of so doing. For my mind was made up to sail in no other than a Nantucket craft, because there was a fine, boisterous something about everything connected with that famous old island, which amazingly pleased me. Besides though New Bedford has of late been gradually



monopolizing the business of whaling, and though in this matter poor old Nantucket is now much behind her, yet Nantucket was her great original — the Tyre of this Carthage; — the place where the first dead American whale was stranded. Where else but from Nantucket did those aboriginal whalers, the Red-Men, first sally out in canoes to give chase to the Leviathan? And where but from Nantucket, too, did that first adventurous little sloop put forth, partly laden with imported cobble-stones — so goes the story — to throw at the whales, in order to discover when they were nigh enough to risk a harpoon from the bowsprit?

Now having a night, a day, and still another night following before me in New Bedford, ere I could embark for my destined port, it became a matter of concernment where I was to eat and sleep meanwhile. It was a very dubious-looking, nay, a very dark and dismal night, bitingly cold and cheerless. I knew no one in the place. With anxious grapnels I had sounded my pocket, and only brought up a few pieces of silver, — So, wherever you go, Ishmael, said I to myself, as I stood in the middle of a dreary street shouldering my bag, and comparing the gloom towards the north with the darkness towards the south — wherever in your wisdom you may conclude to lodge for the night, my dear Ishmael, be sure to inquire the price, and don't be too particular.

With halting steps I paced the streets, and passed the sign of 'The Crossed Harpoons' — but it looked too expensive and jolly there. Further on, from the bright red windows of the 'Sword-Fish Inn,' there came such fervent rays, that it seemed to have melted the packed snow and ice from before the house, for everywhere else the con-



gealed frost lay ten inches thick in a hard, asphaltic pavement, — rather weary for me, when I struck my foot against the flinty projections, because from hard, remorseless service the soles of my boots were in a most miserable plight. Too expensive and jolly, again thought I, pausing one moment to watch the broad glare in the street, and hear the sounds of the tinkling glasses within. But go on, Ishmael, said I at last; don't you hear? get away from before the door; your patched boots are stopping the way. So on I went. I now by instinct followed the streets that took me waterward, for there, doubtless, were the cheapest, if not the cheeriest inns.

Such dreary streets! blocks of blackness, not houses, on either hand, and here and there a candle, like a candle moving about in a tomb. At this hour of the night, of the last day of the week, that quarter of the town proved all but deserted. But presently I came to a smoky light proceeding from a low, wide building, the door of which stood invitingly open. It had a careless look, as if it were meant for the uses of the public; so, entering, the first thing I did was to stumble over an ash-box in the porch. Ha! thought I, ha, as the flying particles almost choked me, are these ashes from that destroyed city, Gomorrah? But 'The Crossed Harpoons,' and 'The Sword-Fish'? — this, then, must needs be the sign of 'The Trap.' However, I picked myself up and hearing a loud voice within, pushed on and opened a second, interior door.

It seemed the great Black Parliament sitting in Tophet. A hundred black faces turned round in their rows to peer; and beyond, a black Angel of Doom was beating a book in a pulpit. It was a negro church; and the preacher's text was about the blackness of darkness, and the weeping and



wailing and teeth-gnashing there. Ha, Ishmael, muttered I, backing out, Wretched entertainment at the sign of 'The Trap'!

Moving on, I at last came to a dim sort of light not far from the docks, and heard a forlorn creaking in the air; and looking up, saw a swinging sign over the door with a white painting upon it, faintly representing a tall straight jet of misty spray, and these words underneath — 'The Spouter-Inn: — Peter Coffin.'

Coffin? — Spouter? — Rather ominous in that particular connexion, thought I. But it is a common name in Nantucket, they say, and I suppose this Peter here is an emigrant from there. As the light looked so dim, and the place, for the time, looked quiet enough, and the dilapidated little wooden house itself looked as if it might have been carted here from the ruins of some burnt district, and as the swinging sign had a poverty-stricken sort of creak to it, I thought that here was the very spot for cheap lodgings, and the best of pea coffee.

It was a queer sort of place — a gable-ended old house, one side palsied as it were, and leaning over sadly. It stood on a sharp bleak corner, where that tempestuous wind Euroclydon kept up a worse howling than ever it did about poor Paul's tossed craft.

But no more of this, we are going a-whaling, and there is plenty of that yet to come. Let us scrape the ice from our frosted feet, and see what sort of a place this 'Spouter' may be.



## CHAPTER II

### THE SPOUTER-INN

ENTERING that gable-ended Spouter-Inn, you found yourself in a wide, low, straggling entry with old-fashioned wainscots, reminding one of the bulwarks of some condemned old craft. On one side hung a very large oil-painting so thoroughly besmoked, and every way defaced, that in the unequal cross-lights by which you viewed it, it was only by diligent study and a series of systematic visits to it, and careful inquiry of the neighbors, that you could any way arrive at an understanding of its purpose. Such unaccountable masses of shades and shadows, that at first you almost thought some ambitious young artist, in the time of the New England hags, had endeavored to delineate chaos bewitched. But by dint of much and earnest contemplation, and oft repeated ponderings, and especially by throwing open the little window towards the back of the entry, you at last come to the conclusion that such an idea, however wild, might not be altogether unwarranted.

But what most puzzled and confounded you was a long, limber, portentous, black mass of something hovering in the centre of the picture over three blue, dim, perpendicular lines floating in a nameless yeast. A boggy, soggy, squitchy picture truly, enough to drive a nervous man distracted. Yet was there a sort of indefinite, half-attained, unimaginable sublimity about it that fairly froze you to it, till you involuntarily took an oath with yourself to find out



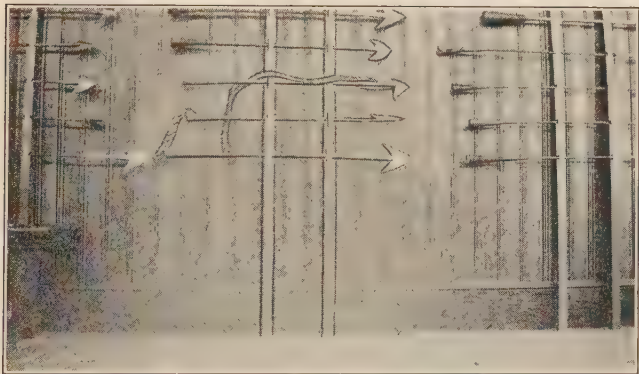
what that marvellous painting meant. Ever and anon a bright, but, alas, deceptive idea would dart you through. — It's the Black Sea in a midnight gale. — It's the unnatural combat of the four primal elements. — It's a blasted heath. — It's a Hyperborean winter scene. — It's the breaking-up of the ice-bound stream of Time. But at last all these fancies yielded to that one portentous something in the picture's midst. *That* once found out, and all the rest were plain. But stop; does it not bear a faint resemblance to a gigantic fish? even the great leviathan himself?

In fact, the artist's design seemed this: a final theory of my own, partly based upon the aggregated opinions of many aged persons with whom I conversed upon the subject. The picture represents a Cape-Horner in a great hurricane; the half-foundered ship weltering there with its three dismantled masts alone visible; and an exasperated whale, purposing to spring clean over the craft, is in the enormous act of impaling himself upon the three mast-heads.

The opposite wall of this entry was hung all over with a heathenish array of monstrous clubs and spears. Some were thickly set with glittering teeth resembling ivory saws; others were tufted with knots of human hair; and one was sickle shaped, with a vast handle sweeping round like the segment made in the new-mown grass by a long-armed mower. You shuddered as you gazed, and wondered what monstrous cannibal and savage could ever have gone a death-harvesting with such a hacking, horrifying implement. Mixed with these were rusty old whaling lances and harpoons all broken and deformed. Some were storied weapons. With this once long lance, now wildly elbowed, fifty years ago did Nathan Swain kill fifteen



whales between a sunrise and a sunset. And that harpoon — so like a corkscrew now — was flung in Javan seas, and run away with by a whale, years afterwards slain off the Cape of Blanco. The original iron entered nigh the tail,



HARPOONS ACTUALLY USED IN WHALING

Part of the collection in the Bourne Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

and, like a restless needle sojourning in the body of a man, travelled full forty feet, and at last was found imbedded in the hump.

Crossing this dusky entry, and on through yon low-arched way — cut through what in old times must have been a great central chimney with fire-places all round — you enter the public room. A still duskier place is this, with such low ponderous beams above, and such old wrinkled planks beneath, that you would almost fancy you trod some old craft's cockpits, especially of such a howling night, when this corner-anchored old ark rocked so furiously. On one side stood a long, low, shelf-like table



covered with cracked glass cases, filled with dusty rarities gathered from this wide world's remotest nooks. Projecting from the further angle of the room stands a dark-looking den — the bar — a rude attempt at a right whale's head. Be that how it may, there stands the vast arched bone of the whale's jaw, so wide, a coach might almost drive beneath it. Within are shabby shelves, ranged round with old decanters, bottles, flasks; and in those jaws of swift destruction, like another cursed Jonah (by which name indeed they called him), bustles a little withered old man, who, for their money, dearly sells the sailors deliriums and death.

Abominable are the tumblers into which he pours his poison. Though true cylinders without — within, the villanous green goggling glasses deceitfully tapered downwards to a cheating bottom. Parallel meridians rudely pecked into the glass, surround these footpads' goblets. Fill to *this* mark, and your charge is but a penny; to *this* a penny more; and so on to the full glass — the Cape Horn measure, which you may gulp down for a shilling.

Upon entering the place I found a number of young seamen gathered about a table, examining by a dim light divers specimens of *skrimshander*. I sought the landlord, and telling him I desired to be accommodated with a room, received for answer that his house was full — not a bed unoccupied. 'But avast,' he added, tapping his forehead, 'you haint no objections to sharing a harpooneer's blanket, have ye? I s'pose you are goin' a whalin', so you'd better get used to that sort of thing.'

I told him that I never liked to sleep two in a bed; that if I should ever do so, it would depend upon who the harpooneer might be, and that if he (the landlord) really had



no other place for me, and the harpooneer was not decidedly objectionable, why rather than wander further about a strange town on so bitter a night, I would put up with the half of any decent man's blanket.

'I thought so. All right; take a seat. Supper? — you want supper? Supper'll be ready directly.'

I sat down on an old wooden settle, carved all over like a bench on the Battery. At one end a ruminating tar was still further adorning it with his jack-knife, stooping over and diligently working away at the space between his legs. He was trying his hand at a ship under full sail, but he didn't make much headway, I thought.

At last some four or five of us were summoned to our meal in an adjoining room. It was cold as Iceland — no fire at all — the landlord said he couldn't afford it. Nothing but two dismal tallow candles, each in a winding sheet. We were fain to button up our monkey jackets, and hold to our lips cups of scalding tea with our half frozen fingers. But the fare was of the most substantial kind — not only meat and potatoes, but dumplings; good heavens! dumplings for supper! One young fellow in a green box coat, addressed himself to these dumplings in a most direful manner.

'My boy,' said the landlord, 'you'll have the nightmare to a dead sartainty.'

'Landlord,' I whispered, 'that ain't the harpooneer, is it?'

'Oh, no,' said he, looking a sort of diabolically funny, 'the harpooneer is a dark complexioned chap. He never eats dumplings, he don't — he eats nothing but steaks, and likes 'em rare.'

'The devil he does,' says I. 'Where is that harpooneer? Is he here?'



‘He’ll be here afore long,’ was the answer.

I could not help it, but I began to feel suspicious of this ‘dark complexioned’ harpooneer. At any rate, I made up my mind that if it so turned out that we should sleep together, he must undress and get into bed before I did.

Supper over, the company went back to the bar-room, when, knowing not what else to do with myself, I resolved to spend the rest of the evening as a looker on.

Presently a rioting noise was heard without. Starting up, the landlord cried, ‘That’s the *Grampus’s* crew. I seed her reported in the offing this morning; a three years’ voyage, and a full ship. Hurrah, boys; now we’ll have the latest news from the Feegees.’

A tramping of sea boots was heard in the entry; the door was flung open, and in rolled a wild set of mariners enough. Enveloped in their shaggy watch coats, and with their heads muffled in woollen comforters, all bedarned and ragged, and their beards stiff with icicles, they seemed an eruption of bears from Labrador. They had just landed from their boat, and this was the first house they entered. No wonder, then, that they made a straight wake for the whale’s mouth — the bar — when the wrinkled little old Jonah, there officiating, soon poured them out brimmers all round. One complained of a bad cold in his head, upon which Jonah mixed him a pitch-like potion of gin and molasses, which he swore was a sovereign cure for all colds and catarrhs whatsoever, never mind of how long standing, or whether caught off the coast of Labrador, or on the weather side of an ice-island.

The liquor soon mounted into their heads, as it generally does even with the arrantest toppers newly landed from sea, and they began capering about most obstreperously.



It was now about nine o'clock, and I began to congratulate myself upon a little plan that had occurred to me just previous to the entrance of the seamen.

No man prefers to sleep two in a bed. In fact, you would a good deal rather not sleep with your own brother. I don't know how it is, but people like to be private when they are sleeping. And when it comes to sleeping with an unknown stranger, in a strange inn, in a strange town, and that stranger a harpooneer, then your objections indefinitely multiply. Nor was there any earthly reason why I as a sailor should sleep two in a bed, more than anybody else; for sailors no more sleep two in a bed at sea, than bachelor Kings do ashore. To be sure they all sleep together in one apartment, but you have your own hammock, and cover yourself with your own blanket, and sleep in your own skin.

The more I pondered over this harpooneer, the more I abominated the thought of sleeping with him. It was fair to presume that being a harpooneer, his linen or woollen, as the case might be, would not be of the tidiest, certainly none of the finest. I began to twitch all over. Besides, it was getting late, and my decent harpooneer ought to be home and going bedwards. Suppose now, he should tumble in upon me at midnight — how could I tell from what vile hole he had been coming?

'Landlord! I've changed my mind about that harpooneer. — I shan't sleep with him. I'll try the bench here.'

'Just as you please; I'm sorry I can't spare ye a tablecloth for a mattress, and it's a plaguy rough board here' — feeling of the knots and notches. 'But wait a bit, Skrimshander; I've got a carpenter's plane there in the bar —



wait, I say, and I'll make ye snug enough.' So saying he procured the plane; and with his old silk handkerchief first dusting the bench, vigorously set to planing away at my bed, the while grinning like an ape. The shavings flew right and left; till at last the plane-iron came bump against an indestructible knot. The landlord was near spraining his wrist, and I told him for heaven's sake to quit — the bed was soft enough to suit me, and I did not know how all the planing in the world could make eider down of a pine plank. So gathering up the shavings with another grin, and throwing them into the great stove in the middle of the room, he went about his business, and left me in a brown study.

I now took the measure of the bench, and found that it was a foot too short; but that could be mended with a chair. But it was a foot too narrow, and the other bench in the room was about four inches higher than the planed one — so there was no yoking them. I then placed the first bench lengthwise along the only clear space against the wall, leaving a little interval between, for my back to settle down in. But I soon found that there came such a draught of cold air over me from under the sill of the window, that this plan would never do at all, especially as another current from the rickety door met the one from the window, and both together formed a series of small whirlwinds in the immediate vicinity of the spot where I had thought to spend the night.

The devil fetch that harpooneer, thought I, but stop, couldn't I steal a march on him — bolt his door inside, and jump into his bed, not to be wakened by the most violent knockings? It seemed no bad idea; but upon second thoughts I dismissed it. For who could tell but what the



next morning, so soon as I popped out of the room, the harpooneer might be standing in the entry, all ready to knock me down!

Still, looking round me again, and seeing no possible chance of spending a sufferable night unless in some other person's bed, I began to think that after all I might be cherishing unwarrantable prejudices against this unknown harpooneer. Thinks I, I'll wait awhile; he must be dropping in before long. I'll have a good look at him then, and perhaps we may become jolly good bedfellows after all — there's no telling.

But though the other boarders kept coming in by ones, twos, and threes, and going to bed, yet no sign of my harpooneer.

'Landlord!' said I, 'what sort of a chap is he — does he always keep such late hours?' It was now hard upon twelve o'clock.

The landlord chuckled again with his lean chuckle, and seemed to be mightily tickled at something beyond my comprehension. 'No,' he answered, 'generally he's an early bird — airley to bed and airley to rise — yea, he's the bird what catches the worm. — But to-night he went out a peddling, you see, and I don't see what on airth keeps him so late, unless, may be, he can't sell his head.'

'Can't sell his head? — What sort of a bamboozing story is this you are telling me?' getting into a towering rage. 'Do you pretend to say, landlord, that this harpooneer is actually engaged this blessed Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning, in peddling his head around this town?'

'That's precisely it,' said the landlord, 'and I told him he couldn't sell it here, the market's overstocked.'



‘With what?’ shouted I.

‘With heads to be sure; ain’t there too many heads in the world?’

‘I tell you what it is, landlord,’ said I, quite calmly, ‘you’d better stop spinning that yarn to me — I’m not green.’

‘May be not,’ taking out a stick and whittling a tooth-pick, ‘but I rayther guess you’ll be done *brown* if that ere harpooneer hears you a slanderin’ his head.’

‘I’ll break it for him,’ said I, now flying into a passion again at this unaccountable farrago of the landlord’s.

‘It’s broke a’ready,’ said he.

‘Broke,’ said I — ‘*broke*, do you mean?’

‘Sartain, and that’s the very reason he can’t sell it, I guess.’

‘Landlord,’ said I, going up to him as cool as Mt. Hecla in a snow storm — ‘landlord, stop whittling. You and I must understand one another, and that too without delay. I come to your house and want a bed; you tell me you can only give me half a one; that the other half belongs to a certain harpooneer. And about this harpooneer, whom I have not yet seen, you persist in telling me the most mystifying and exasperating stories, tending to beget in me an uncomfortable feeling towards the man whom you design for my bedfellow — a sort of connexion, landlord, which is an intimate and confidential one in the highest degree. I now demand of you to speak out and tell me who and what this harpooneer is, and whether I shall be in all respects safe to spend the night with him. And in the first place, you will be so good as to unsay that story about selling his head, which if true I take to be good evidence that this harpooneer is stark mad, and I’ve no



idea of sleeping with a madman ; and you, sir, *you* I mean, landlord, *you*, sir, by trying to induce me to do so knowingly, would thereby render yourself liable to a criminal prosecution.'

'Wall,' said the landlord, fetching a long breath, 'that's a purty long sarmon for a chap that rips a little now and then. But be easy, be easy, this here harpooneer I have been tellin' you of has just arrived from the south seas, where he bought up a lot of 'balmed New Zealand heads (great curios, you know), and he's sold all on 'em but one, and that one he's trying to sell to-night, cause to-morrow's Sunday, and it would not do to be sellin' human heads about the streets when folks is goin' to churches. He wanted to, last Sunday, but I stopped him just as he was goin' out of the door with four heads strung on a string, for all the airth like a string of inions.'

This account cleared up the otherwise unaccountable mystery, and showed that the landlord, after all, had had no idea of fooling me — but at the same time what could I think of a harpooneer who stayed out of a Saturday night clean into the holy Sabbath, engaged in such a cannibal business as selling the heads of dead idolators?

'Depend upon it, landlord, that harpooneer is a dangerous man.'

'He pays reg'lar,' was the rejoinder. 'But come, it's getting dreadful late, you had better be turning flukes — it's a nice bed. There's plenty room for two to kick about in that bed ; it's an almighty big bed that. Come along here, I'll give ye a glim in a jiffy' ; and so saying he lighted a candle and held it towards me, offering to lead the way. But I stood irresolute ; when looking at a clock in the corner, he exclaimed 'I vum it's Sunday — you won't see that



harpooneer to-night ; he's come to anchor somewhere — come along then ; *do* come ; *won't* ye come ?'

I considered the matter a moment, and then up stairs we went, and I was ushered into a small room, cold as a clam, and furnished, sure enough, with a prodigious bed, almost big enough indeed for any four harpooneers to sleep abreast.

'There,' said the landlord, placing the candle on a crazy old sea chest that did double duty as a wash-stand and centre table ; 'there, make yourself comfortable now, and good night to ye.' I turned round from eyeing the bed, but he had disappeared.

Folding back the counterpane, I stooped over the bed. Though none of the most elegant, it yet stood the scrutiny tolerably well. I then glanced round the room ; and besides the bed-stead and centre table, could see no other furniture belonging to the place, but a rude shelf, the four walls, and a papered fireboard representing a man striking a whale. Of things not properly belonging to the room, there was a hammock lashed up, and thrown upon the floor in one corner ; also a large seaman's bag, containing the harpooneer's wardrobe, no doubt in lieu of a land trunk. Likewise, there was a parcel of outlandish bone fish hooks on the shelf over the fire-place, and a tall harpoon standing at the head of the bed.

But what is this on the chest ? I took it up, and held it close to the light, and felt it, and smelt it, and tried every way possible to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion concerning it. I can compare it to nothing but a large door mat, ornamented at the edges with little tinkling tags something like the stained porcupine quills round an Indian moccasin. There was a hole or slit in the middle of this



mat, as you see the same in South American ponchos. But could it be possible that any sober harpooneer would get into a door mat, and parade the streets of any Christian town in that sort of guise? I put it on, to try it, and it weighed me down like a hamper, being uncommonly shaggy and thick, and I thought a little damp, as though this mysterious harpooneer had been wearing it of a rainy day. I went up in it to a bit of glass stuck against the wall, and I never saw such a sight in my life. I tore myself out of it in such a hurry that I gave myself a kink in the neck.

I sat down on the side of the bed, and commenced thinking about this head-peddling harpooneer, and his door mat. After thinking some time on the bed-side, I got up and took off my monkey jacket, and then stood in the middle of the room thinking. I then took off my coat, and thought a little more in my shirt sleeves. But beginning to feel very cold now, half undressed as I was, and remembering what the landlord said about the harpooneer's not coming home at all that night, it being so very late, I made no more ado, but jumped out of my pantaloons and boots, and then blowing out the light tumbled into bed, and commended myself to the care of heaven.

Whether that mattress was stuffed with corncobs or broken crockery, there is no telling, but I rolled about a good deal, and could not sleep for a long time. At last I slid off into a light doze, and had pretty nearly made a good offing towards the land of Nod, when I heard a heavy foot-fall in the passage, and saw a glimmer of light come into the room from under the door.

Lord save me, thinks I, that must be the harpooneer, the infernal head-peddler. But I lay perfectly still, and resolved not to say a word till spoken to. Holding a light



in one hand, and that identical New Zealand head in the other, the stranger entered the room, and without looking towards the bed, placed his candle a good way off from me on the floor in one corner, and then began working away at the knotted cords of the large bag I before spoke of as being in the room. I was all eagerness to see his face, but he kept it averted for some time while employed in unlacing the bag's mouth. This accomplished, however, he turned round — when, good heavens! what a sight! Such a face! It was of a dark, purplish, yellow color, here and there stuck over with large, blackish looking squares. Yes, it's just as I thought, he's a terrible bedfellow; he's been in a fight, got dreadfully cut, and here he is, just from the surgeon. But at that moment he chanced to turn his face so towards the light, that I plainly saw they could not be sticking-plasters at all, those black squares on his cheeks. They were stains of some sort or other. At first I knew not what to make of this; but soon an inkling of the truth occurred to me. I remembered a story of a white man — a whaleman too — who, falling among the cannibals, had been tattooed by them. I concluded that this harpooneer, in the course of his distant voyages, must have met with a similar adventure. And what is it, thought I, after all! It's only his outside; a man can be honest in any sort of skin. But then, what to make of his unearthly complexion, that part of it, I mean, lying round about, and completely independent of the squares of tattooing. To be sure, it might be nothing but a good coat of tropical tanning; but I never heard of a hot sun's tanning a white man into a purplish yellow one. However, I had never been in the South Seas; and perhaps the sun there produced these extraordinary effects upon the skin. Now,



while all these ideas were passing through me like lightning, this harpooneer never noticed me at all. But, after some difficulty having opened his bag, he commenced fumbling in it, and presently pulled out a sort of tomahawk, and a seal-skin wallet with the hair on. Placing these on the old chest in the middle of the room, he then took the New Zealand head — a ghastly thing enough — and crammed it down into the bag. He now took off his hat — a new beaver hat — when I came nigh singing out with fresh surprise. There was no hair on his head — none to speak of at least — nothing but a small scalp-knot twisted up on his forehead. His bald purplish head now looked for all the world like a mildewed skull. Had not the stranger stood between me and the door, I would have bolted out of it quicker than ever I bolted a dinner.

Even as it was, I thought something of slipping out of the window, but it was the second floor back. I am no coward, but what to make of this head-peddling purple rascal altogether passed my comprehension. Ignorance is the parent of fear, and being completely nonplussed and confounded about the stranger, I confess I was now as much afraid of him as if it was the devil himself who had thus broken into my room at the dead of night. In fact, I was so afraid of him that I was not game enough just then to address him, and demand a satisfactory answer concerning what seemed inexplicable in him.

Meanwhile, he continued the business of undressing, and at last showed his chest and arms. As I live, these covered parts of him were checkered with the same squares as his face; his back, too, was all over the same dark squares; he seemed to have been in a Thirty Years' War, and just escaped from it with a sticking-plaster shirt. Still more, his



very legs were marked, as if a parcel of dark green frogs were running up the trunks of young palms. It was now quite plain that he must be some abominable savage or other shipped aboard of a whaler in the South Seas, and so landed in this Christian country. I quaked to think of it. A peddler of heads too — perhaps the heads of his own brothers. He might take a fancy to mine — heavens! look at that tomahawk!

But there was no time for shuddering, for now the savage went about something that completely fascinated my attention, and convinced me that he must indeed be a heathen. Going to his heavy grego, or wrapall, or dread-naught, which he had previously hung on a chair, he fumbled in the pockets, and produced at length a curious little deformed image with a hunch on its back, and exactly the color of a three days' old Congo baby. Remembering the embalmed head, at first I almost thought that this black manikin was a real baby preserved in some similar manner. But seeing that it was not at all limber, and that it glistened a good deal like polished ebony, I concluded that it must be nothing but a wooden idol, which indeed it proved to be. For now the savage goes up to the empty fire-place, and removing the papered fire-board, sets up this little hunch-backed image, like a tenpin, between the andirons. The chimney jambs and all the bricks inside were very sooty, so that I thought this fire-place made a very appropriate little shrine or chapel for his Congo idol.

I now screwed my eyes hard towards the half hidden image, feeling but ill at ease meantime — to see what was next to follow. First he takes about a double handful of shavings out of his grego pocket, and places them carefully



before the idol ; then laying a bit of ship biscuit on top and applying the flame from the lamp, he kindled the shavings into a sacrificial blaze. Presently, after many hasty snatches into the fire, and still hastier withdrawals of his fingers (whereby he seemed to be scorching them badly), he at last succeeded in drawing out the biscuit ; then blowing off the heat and ashes a little, he made a polite offer of it to the little negro. But the little devil did not seem to fancy such dry sort of fare at all ; he never moved his lips. All these strange antics were accompanied by still stranger guttural noises from the devotee, who seemed to be praying in a sing-song or else singing some pagan psalmody or other, during which his face twitched about in the most unnatural manner. At last extinguishing the fire, he took the idol up very unceremoniously, and bagged it again in his grego pocket as carelessly as if he were a sportsman bagging a dead woodcock..

All these queer proceedings increased my uncomfortable-ness, and seeing him now exhibiting strong symptoms of concluding his business operations, and jumping into bed with me, I thought it was high time, now or never, before the light was put out, to break the spell in which I had so long been bound.

But the interval I spent in deliberating what to say, was a fatal one. Taking up his tomahawk from the table, he examined the head of it for an instant, and then holding it to the light, with his mouth at the handle, he puffed out great clouds of tobacco smoke. The next moment the light was extinguished, and this wild cannibal, tomahawk between his teeth, sprang into bed with me. I sang out, I could not help it now ; and giving a sudden grunt of astonishment he began feeling me.



Stammering out something, I knew not what, I rolled away from him against the wall, and then conjured him, whoever or whatever he might be, to keep quiet, and let me get up and light the lamp again. But his guttural responses satisfied me at once that he but ill comprehended my meaning.

'Who-e debel you?' — he at last said — 'you no speak-e dam-me, I kill-e.' And so saying the lighted tomahawk began flourishing about me in the dark.

'Landlord, for God's sake, Peter Coffin!' shouted I. 'Landlord! Watch! Coffin! Angels! save me!'

'Speak-e! tell-ee me who-ee be, or dam-me, I kill-e!' again growled the cannibal, while his horrid flourishings of the tomahawk scattered the hot tobacco ashes about me till I thought my linen would get on fire. But thank heaven, at that moment the landlord came into the room light in hand, and leaping from the bed I ran up to him.

'Don't be afraid now,' said he, grinning again. 'Queequeg here wouldn't harm a hair of your head.'

'Stop your grinning,' shouted I, 'and why didn't you tell me that that infernal harpooneer was a cannibal?'

'I thought ye know'd it; — didn't I tell ye, he was a peddlin' heads around town? — but turn flukes again and go to sleep. Queequeg, look here — you sabbee me, I sabbee you — this man sleepe you — you sabbee?'

'Me sabbee plenty' — grunted Queequeg, puffing away at his pipe and sitting up in bed.

'You gettee in,' he added, motioning to me with his tomahawk, and throwing the clothes to one side. He really did this in not only a civil but a really kind and charitable way. I stood looking at him a moment. For all his tattooings he was on the whole a clean, comely looking



cannibal. What's all this fuss I have been making about, thought I to myself — the man's a human being just as I am : he has just as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him. Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian.

'Landlord,' said I, 'tell him to stash his tomahawk there, or pipe, or whatever you call it ; tell him to stop smoking, in short, and I will turn in with him. But I don't fancy having a man smoking in bed with me. It's dangerous. Besides, I ain't insured.'

This being told to Queequeg, he at once complied, and again politely motioned me to get into bed — rolling over to one side as much as to say — I won't touch a leg of ye.

'Good night, landlord,' said I, 'you may go.'

I turned in, and never slept better in my life.



## CHAPTER III

### THE COUNTERPANE

UPON waking next morning about daylight, I found Queequeg's arm thrown over me in the most loving and affectionate manner. The counterpane was of patchwork, full of odd little particolored squares and triangles; and this arm of his tattooed all over with an interminable Cretan labyrinth of a figure, no two parts of which were of one precise shade — owing I suppose to his keeping his arm at sea unmethodically in sun and shade, his shirt sleeves irregularly rolled up at various times — this same arm of his, I say, looked for all the world like a strip of that same patchwork quilt. Indeed, partly lying on it as the arm did when I first awoke, I could hardly tell it from the quilt, they so blended their hues together; and it was only by the sense of weight and pressure that I could tell that Queequeg was hugging me.

At length all the past night's events soberly recurred, one by one, in fixed reality, and then I lay only alive to the comical predicament. For though I tried to move his arm, he still hugged me tightly, as though naught but death should part us twain. I now strove to rouse him — 'Queequeg' — but his only answer was a snore. I then rolled over, my neck feeling as if it were in a horse-collar; and suddenly felt a slight scratch. Throwing aside the counterpane, there lay the tomahawk sleeping by the savage's side, as if it were a hatchet-faced baby. A pretty



pickle, truly, thought I; abed here in a strange house in the broad day, with a cannibal and a tomahawk! 'Queequeg! — in the name of goodness, Queequeg, wake!' At length, by dint of much wriggling, and loud and incessant expostulations, I succeeded in extracting a grunt; and presently, he drew back his arm, shook himself all over like a Newfoundland dog just from the water, and sat up in bed, stiff as a pike-staff, looking at me, and rubbing his eyes as if he did not altogether remember how I came to be there, though a dim consciousness of knowing something about me seemed slowly dawning over him. Meanwhile, I lay quietly eyeing him, having no serious misgivings now, and bent upon narrowly observing so curious a creature. When, at last, his mind seemed made up touching the character of his bedfellow, and he became, as it were, reconciled to the fact; he jumped out upon the floor, and by certain signs and sounds gave me to understand that, if it pleased me, he would dress first and then leave me to dress afterwards, leaving the whole apartment to myself. Thinks I, Queequeg, under the circumstances, this is a very civilized overture; but, the truth is, these savages have an innate sense of delicacy, say what you will; it is marvellous how essentially polite they are. I pay this particular compliment to Queequeg, because he treated me with so much civility and consideration, while I was guilty of great rudeness; staring at him from the bed, and watching all his toilette motions; for the time my curiosity getting the better of my breeding. Nevertheless, a man like Queequeg you don't see every day, he and his ways were well worth unusual regarding.

He commenced dressing at top by donning his beaver hat, a very tall one, by the by, and then — still minus his



trowsers — he hunted up his boots. What under the heavens he did it for, I cannot tell, but his next movement was to crush himself — boots in hand, and hat on — under the bed ; when, from sundry violent graspings and strainings, I inferred he was hard at work booting himself ; though by no law of propriety that I ever heard of is any man required to be private when putting on his boots. But Queequeg, do you see, was a creature in the transition stage — neither caterpillar nor butterfly. He was just enough civilized to show off his outlandishness in the strangest possible manner. His education was not yet completed. He was an undergraduate. If he had not been a small degree civilized, he very probably would not have troubled himself with boots at all ; but then, if he had not been still a savage, he never would have dreamt of getting under the bed to put them on. At last, he emerged with his hat very much dented and crushed down over his eyes, and began creaking and limping about the room, as if, not being much accustomed to boots, his pair of damp, wrinkled cowhide ones — probably not made to order either — rather pinched and tormented him at the first go off of a bitter cold morning.

Seeing, now, that there were no curtains to the window, and that the street being very narrow, the house opposite commanded a plain view into the room, and observing more and more the indecorous figure that Queequeg made, staving about with little else but his hat and boots on ; I begged him as well as I could, to accelerate his toilet somewhat, and particularly to get into his pantaloons as soon as possible. He complied, and then proceeded to wash himself. At that time in the morning any Christian would have washed his face ; but Queequeg, to my amazement,



contented himself with restricting his ablutions to his chest, arms, and hands. He then donned his waistcoat, and taking up a piece of hard soap on the wash-stand centre-table, dipped it into water and commenced lathering his face. I was watching to see where he kept his razor, when lo and behold, he takes the harpoon from the bed corner, slips out the long wooden stock, unsheathes the head, whets it a little on his boot, and striding up to the bit of mirror against the wall, begins a vigorous scraping, or rather harpooning of his cheeks. Thinks I, Queequeg, this is using Rogers's best cutlery with a vengeance. Afterwards I wondered the less at this operation when I came to know of what fine steel the head of a harpoon is made, and how exceedingly sharp the long straight edges are always kept.

The rest of his toilet was soon achieved, and he proudly marched out of the room, wrapped up in his great pilot monkey jacket, and sporting his harpoon like a marshal's baton.



## CHAPTER IV

### BREAKFAST

I QUICKLY followed suit, and descending into the bar-room accosted the grinning landlord very pleasantly. I cherished no malice towards him, though he had been skylarking with me not a little in the matter of my bedfellow.

However, a good laugh is a mighty good thing, and rather too scarce a good thing; the more's the pity. So, if any one man, in his own proper person, afford stuff for a good joke to anybody, let him not be backward, but let him cheerfully allow himself to spend and to be spent in that way. And the man that has anything bountifully laughable about him, be sure there is more in that man than you perhaps think for.

The bar room was now full of the boarders who had been dropping in the night previous, and whom I had not as yet had a good look at. They were nearly all whalemén; chief mates, and second mates, and third mates, and sea carpenters, and sea coopers, and sea blacksmiths, and harpooners, and ship keepers; a brown and brawny company, with bosky beards; an unshorn, shaggy set, all wearing monkey jackets for morning gowns.

You could pretty plainly tell how long each one had been ashore. This young fellow's healthy cheek is like a sun-toasted pear in hue, and would seem to smell almost as musky; he cannot have been three days landed from his Indian voyage. That man next him looks a few shades



lighter ; you might say a touch of satin wood is in him. In the complexion of a third still lingers a tropic tawn, but slightly bleached withal ; *he* doubtless has tarried whole weeks ashore. But who could show a cheek like Queequeg ? which, barred with various tints, seemed like the Andes' western slope, to show forth in one array, contrasting climates, zone by zone.

'Grub, ho !' now cried the landlord, flinging open a door, and in we went to breakfast.

They say that men who have seen the world, thereby become quite at ease in manner, quite self-possessed in company. Not always, though : Ledyard, the great New England traveller, and Mungo Park, the Scotch one ; of all men, they possessed the least assurance in the parlor. But perhaps the mere crossing of Siberia in a sledge drawn by dogs as Ledyard did, or the taking a long solitary walk on an empty stomach, in the negro heart of Africa, which was the sum of poor Mungo's performances — this kind of travel, I say, may not be the very best mode of attaining a high social polish. Still, for the most part, that sort of thing is to be had anywhere.

These reflections just here are occasioned by the circumstance that after we were all seated at the table, and I was preparing to hear some good stories about whaling ; to my no small surprise nearly every man maintained a profound silence. And not only that, but they looked embarrassed. Yes, here were a set of sea-dogs, many of whom without the slightest bashfulness had boarded great whales on the high seas — entire strangers to them — and duelled them dead without winking ; and yet, here they sat at a social breakfast table — all of the same calling, all of kindred tastes — looking round as sheepishly at each other as



though they had never been out of sight of some sheepfold among the Green Mountains. A curious sight; these bashful bears, these timid warrior whalemén!

But as for Queequeg — why, Queequeg sat there among them — at the head of the table, too, it so chanced; as cool as an icicle. To be sure I cannot say much for his breeding. His greatest admirer could not have cordially justified his bringing his harpoon into breakfast with him, and using it there without ceremony; reaching over the table with it, to the imminent jeopardy of many heads, and grappling the beefsteaks towards him. But *that* was certainly very coolly done by him, and every one knows that in most people's estimation, to do anything coolly is to do it genteelly.

We will not speak of all Queequeg's peculiarities here; how he eschewed coffee and hot rolls, and applied his undivided attention to beefsteaks, done rare. Enough, that when breakfast was over he withdrew like the rest into the public room, lighted his tomahawk-pipe, and was sitting there quietly digesting and smoking with his inseparable hat on, when I sallied out for a stroll.



## CHAPTER V

### THE STREET

IF I had been astonished at first catching a glimpse of so outlandish an individual as Queequeg circulating among the polite society of a civilized town, that astonishment soon departed upon taking my first daylight stroll through the streets of New Bedford.

In thoroughfares nigh the docks, any considerable seaport will frequently offer to view the queerest looking non-descripts from foreign parts. Even in Broadway and Chestnut streets, Mediterranean mariners will sometimes jostle the affrighted ladies. Regent Street is not unknown to Lascars and Malays; and at Bombay, in the Apollo Green, live Yankees have often scared the natives. But New Bedford beats all Water Street and Wapping. In these last-mentioned haunts you see only sailors; but in New Bedford, actual cannibals stand chatting at street corners; savages outright; many of whom yet carry on their bones unholy flesh. It makes a stranger stare.

But, besides the Feejeeans, Tongatobooarrs, Erromangoans, Pannangians, and, besides the wild specimens of the whaling-craft which unheeded reel about the streets, you will see other sights still more curious, certainly more comical. There weekly arrive in this town scores of green Vermonters and New Hampshire men, all athirst for gain and glory in the fishery. They are mostly young, of stalwart frames; fellows who have felled forests, and now seek



to drop the axe and snatch the whale-lance. Many are as green as the Green Mountains whence they came. In some things you would think them but a few hours old. Look there! that chap strutting round the corner. He wears a beaver hat and swallow-tailed coat, girdled with a sailor-belt and a sheath-knife. Here comes another with a sou'-wester and a bombazine cloak.

No town-bred dandy will compare with a country-bred one — I mean a downright bumpkin dandy — a fellow that, in the dog-days, will mow his two acres in buckskin gloves for fear of tanning his hands. Now when a country dandy like this takes it into his head to make a distinguished reputation, and joins the great whale-fishery, you should see the comical things he does upon reaching the seaport. In bespeaking his sea-outfit, he orders bell-buttons to his waistcoats; straps to his canvas trowsers. Ah, poor Hay-Seed! how bitterly will burst those straps in the first howling gale, when thou art driven, straps, buttons, and all, down the throat of the tempest.

But think not that this famous town has only harpoon-eers, cannibals, and bumpkins to show her visitors. Not at all. Still New Bedford is a queer place. Had it not been for us whalemén, that tract of land would this day perhaps have been in as howling condition as the coast of Labrador. As it is, parts of her back country are enough to frighten one, they look so bony. The town itself is perhaps the dearest place to live in, in all New England. It is a land of oil, true enough: but not like Caanan; a land, also, of corn and wine. The streets do not run with milk; nor in the spring-time do they pave them with fresh eggs. Yet, in spite of this, nowhere in all America will you find more patrician-like houses; parks and gardens more



opulent, than in New Bedford. Whence came they? how planted upon this once scraggy scoria of a country?

Go and gaze upon the iron emblematical harpoons round yonder lofty mansion, and your question will be answered. Yes; all these brave houses and flowery gardens came from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans. One and all, they were harpooned and dragged up hither from the bottom of the sea. Can Herr Alexander perform a feat like that?

In New Bedford, fathers, they say, give whales for dowers to their daughters, and portion off their nieces with a few porpoises a-piece. You must go to New Bedford to see a brilliant wedding; for, they say, they have reservoirs of oil in every house, and every night recklessly burn their lengths in spermaceti candles.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHAPEL

IN the same New Bedford there stands a Whaleman's Chapel, and few are the moody fishermen, shortly bound for the Indian Ocean or Pacific, who fail to make a Sunday visit to the spot. I am sure that I did not.



THE SEAMEN'S BETHEL ON JOHNNY  
CAKE HILL, NEW BEDFORD

It was here that Melville heard Father Mapple's sermon on Jonah and the whale.

Returning from my first morning stroll, I again sallied out upon this special errand. The sky had changed from clear, sunny cold, to driving sleet and mist. Wrapping myself in my shaggy jacket of the cloth called bearskin, I fought my way against the stubborn storm. Entering, I found a small scattered congregation of sailors, and sailors' wives and widows. A muffled silence reigned, only broken at times by the shrieks of the storm. Each silent worshipper seemed purposely sitting apart from the other, as if each silent grief were insular and incommunicable.



The chaplain had not yet arrived; and there these silent islands of men and women sat steadfastly eyeing several marble tablets, with black borders, masoned into the wall on either side the pulpit. Three of them ran something like the following, but I do not pretend to quote:—

SACRED  
*To the Memory*

OF  
JOHN TALBOT,

Who, at the age of eighteen, was lost  
overboard,  
Near the Isle of Desolation, off Patagonia,  
*November 1st, 1836.*

THIS TABLET  
Is erected to his Memory  
BY HIS SISTER.

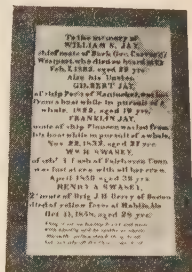
SACRED  
*To the Memory*

OF  
ROBERT LONG, WILLIS ELLERY,  
NATHAN COLEMAN, WALTER CANNY, SETH MACY,  
AND SAMUEL GLEIG,

Forming one of the boats' crews

OF  
THE SHIP *ELIZA*,  
Who were towed out of sight by a Whale,  
On the Off-shore Ground in the  
PACIFIC,  
*December 31st, 1839.*

THIS MARBLE  
Is here placed by their surviving  
Shipmates.



A MEMORIAL TABLET  
IN THE SEAMEN'S  
BETHEL IN NEW  
BEDFORD

'This tablet was  
erected to the mem-  
ory of five whalem-  
en lost on whaling voy-  
ages.



SACRED  
*To the Memory*  
 OF  
 The late  
 CAPTAIN EZEKIEL HARDY,  
 Who in the bows of his boat was killed by a  
 Sperm Whale on the coast of Japan,  
*August 3d, 1833.*  
 THIS TABLET  
 Is erected to his Memory  
 BY  
 HIS WIDOW.

Shaking off the sleet from my ice-glazed hat and jacket, I seated myself near the door, and turning sideways was surprised to see Queequeg near me. Affected by the solemnity of the scene, there was a wondering gaze of incredulous curiosity in his countenance. This savage was the only person present who seemed to notice my entrance; because he was the only one who could not read, and, therefore, was not reading those frigid inscriptions on the wall. Whether any of the relatives of the seamen whose names appeared there were now among the congregation, I knew not; but so many are the unrecorded accidents in the fishery, and so plainly did several women present wear the countenance if not the trappings of some unceasing grief, that I feel sure that here before me were assembled those, in whose unhealing hearts the sight of those bleak tablets sympathetically caused the old wounds to bleed afresh.

It needs scarcely to be told, with what feelings, on the eve of a Nantucket voyage, I regarded those marble tablets, and by the murky light of that darkened, doleful day read the fate of the whalemén who had gone before me.



Yes, Ishmael, the same fate may be thine. But somehow I grew merry again. Delightful inducements to embark, fine chance for promotion, it seems — aye, a stove boat will make me an immortal by brevet.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE PULPIT

I HAD not been seated very long ere a man of a certain venerable robustness entered ; immediately as the storm-pelted door flew back upon admitting him, a quick regardful eyeing of him by all the congregation, sufficiently attested that this fine old man was the chaplain. Yes, it was the famous Father Mapple, so called by the whalemén, among whom he was a very great favorite. He had been a sailor and a harpooneer in his youth, but for many years past had dedicated his life to the ministry. At the time I now write of, Father Mapple was in the hardy winter of a healthy old age : that sort of old age which seems merging into a second flowering youth, for among all the fissures of his wrinkles, there shone certain mild gleams of a newly developing bloom — the spring verdure peeping forth even beneath February's snow. No one having previously heard his history, could for the first time behold Father Mapple without the utmost interest, because there were certain engrafted clerical peculiarities about him, imputable to that adventurous maritime life he had led. When he entered I observed that he carried no umbrella, and certainly had not come in his carriage, for his tarpaulin hat ran down with melting sleet, and his great pilot cloth jacket seemed almost to drag him to the floor with the weight of the water it had absorbed. However, hat and coat and overshoes were one by one removed, and hung up



in a little space in an adjacent corner ; when, arrayed in a decent suit, he quietly approached the pulpit.

Like most old fashioned pulpits, it was a very lofty one, and since a regular stairs to such a height would, by its long angle with the floor, seriously contract the already small area of the chapel, the architect, it seemed, had acted upon the hint of Father Mapple, and finished the pulpit without a stairs, substituting a perpendicular side ladder, like those used in mounting a ship from a boat at sea. The wife of a whaling captain had provided the chapel with a handsome pair of red worsted man-ropes for this ladder, which, being itself nicely headed, and stained with a mahogany color, the whole contrivance, considering what manner of chapel it was, seemed by no means in bad taste. Halting for an instant at the foot of the ladder, and with both hands grasping the ornamental knobs of the man-ropes, Father Mapple cast a look upwards, and then with a truly sailor-like but still reverential dexterity, hand over hand, mounted the steps as if ascending the main-top of his vessel.

The perpendicular parts of this side ladder, as is usually the case with swinging ones, were of cloth-covered rope, only the rounds were of wood, so that at every step there was a joint. At my first glimpse of the pulpit, it had not escaped me that however convenient for a ship, these joints in the present instance seemed unnecessary. For I was not prepared to see Father Mapple after gaining the height, slowly turn round, and stooping over the pulpit, deliberately drag up the ladder step by step, till the whole was deposited within, leaving him impregnable in his little Quebec.

I pondered some time without fully comprehending the



reason for this. Father Mapple enjoyed such a wide reputation for sincerity and sanctity, that I could not suspect him of courting notoriety by any mere tricks of the stage. No, thought I, there must be some sober reason for this thing; furthermore, it must symbolize something unseen. Can it be, then, that by that act of physical isolation, he signifies his spiritual withdrawal for the time, from all outward worldly ties and connexions? Yes, for replenished with the meat and wine of the word, to the faithful man of God, this pulpit, I see, is a self-containing stronghold — a lofty Ehrenbreitstein, with a perennial well of water within the walls.

But the side ladder was not the only strange feature of the place, borrowed from the chaplain's former sea-farings. Between the marble cenotaphs on either hand of the pulpit, the wall which formed its back was adorned with a large painting representing a gallant ship beating against a terrible storm off a lee coast of black rocks and snowy breakers. But high above the flying scud and dark-rolling clouds, there floated a little isle of sunlight, from which beamed forth an angel's face; and this bright face shed a distinct spot of radiance upon the ship's tossed deck, something like that silver plate now inserted into the *Victory's* plank where Nelson fell. 'Ah, noble ship,' the angel seemed to say, 'beat on, beat on, thou noble ship, and bear a hardy helm; for lo! the sun is breaking through; the clouds are rolling off — serenest azure is at hand.'

Nor was the pulpit itself without a trace of the same sea-taste that had achieved the ladder and the picture. Its panelled front was in the likeness of a ship's bluff bows, and the Holy Bible rested on a projecting piece of scroll work, fashioned after a ship's fiddle-headed beak.



What could be more full of meaning? — for the pulpit is ever this earth's foremost part ; all the rest comes in its rear ; the pulpit leads the world. From thence it is the storm of God's quick wrath is first descried, and the bow must bear the earliest brunt. From thence it is the God of breezes fair or foul is first invoked for favorable winds. Yes, the world's a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete ; and the pulpit is its prow.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SERMON

FATHER MAPPLE rose, and in a mild voice of unassuming authority ordered the scattered people to condense. 'Star-board gangway, there! side away to larboard — larboard gangway to starboard! Midships! midships!'

There was a low rumbling of heavy sea-boots among the benches, and a still slighter shuffling of women's shoes, and all was quiet again, and every eye on the preacher.

He paused a little; then kneeling in the pulpit's bows, folded his large brown hands across his chest, uplifted his closed eyes, and offered a prayer so deeply devout that he seemed kneeling and praying at the bottom of the sea.

This ended, in prolonged solemn tones, like the continual tolling of a bell in a ship that is foundering at sea in a fog — in such tones he commenced reading the following hymn; but changing his manner towards the concluding stanzas, burst forth with a pealing exultation and joy —

' The ribs and terrors in the whale,  
    Arched over me a dismal gloom,  
While all God's sun-lit waves rolled by,  
    And lift me deepening down to doom.

' I saw the opening maw of hell,  
    With endless pains and sorrows there;  
Which none but they that feel can tell—  
    Oh, I was plunging to despair.



‘In black distress, I called my God,  
When I could scarce believe him *mine*,  
He bowed his ear to my complaints —  
No more the whale did me confine.

‘With speed he flew to my relief,  
As on a radiant dolphin borne;  
Awful, yet bright, as lightning shone  
The face of my Deliverer God.

‘My song for ever shall record  
That terrible, that joyful hour;  
I give the glory to my God,  
His all the mercy and the power.’

Nearly all joined in singing this hymn, which swelled high above the howling of the storm. A brief pause ensued; the preacher slowly turned over the leaves of the Bible, and at last, folding his hand down upon the proper page, said: ‘Beloved shipmates, clinch the last verse of the first chapter of Jonah — “And God had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.” ’

‘Shipmates, this book, containing only four chapters — four yarns — is one of the smallest strands in the mighty cable of the Scriptures. Yet what depths of the soul does Jonah’s deep sea-line sound! what a pregnant lesson to us is this prophet! What a noble thing is that canticle in the fish’s belly! How billow-like and boisterously grand! We feel the floods surging over us, we sound with him to the kelpy bottom of the waters; sea-weed and all the slime of the sea is about us! But *what* is this lesson that the book of Jonah teaches? Ship mates, it is a two-stranded lesson; a lesson to us all as sinful men, and a lesson to me as a pilot of the living God. As sinful men, it is a lesson to us all, because it is a story of the sin, hard-heartedness, suddenly



awakened fears, the swift punishment, repentance, prayers, and finally the deliverance and joy of Jonah. As with all sinners among men, the sin of this son of Amittai was in his wilful disobedience of the command of God — never mind now what that command was, or how conveyed — which he found a hard command. But all the things that God would have us do are hard for us to do — remember that — and hence, he oftener commands us than endeavors to persuade. And if we obey God, we must disobey ourselves; and it is in this disobeying ourselves, wherein the hardness of obeying God consists.

With this sin of disobedience in him, Jonah still further flouts at God, by seeking to flee from Him. He thinks that a ship made by men, will carry him into countries where God does not reign, but only the Captains of this earth. He skulks about the wharves of Joppa, and seeks a ship that's bound for Tarshish. There lurks, perhaps, a hitherto unheeded meaning here. By all accounts Tarshish could have been no other city than the modern Cadiz. That's the opinion of learned men. And where is Cadiz, shipmates? Cadiz is in Spain; as far by water, from Joppa, as Jonah could possibly have sailed in those ancient days, when the Atlantic was an almost unknown sea. Because Joppa, the modern Jaffa, shipmates, is on the most easterly coast of the Mediterranean, the Syrian; and Tarshish or Cadiz more than two thousand miles to the westward from that, just outside the Straits of Gibraltar. See ye not then, shipmates, that Jonah sought to flee world-wide from God? Miserable man! Oh! most contemptible and worthy of all scorn; with slouched hat and guilty eye, skulking from his God; prowling among the shipping like a vile burglar hastening to cross the seas. So dis-



ordered, self-condemning is his look, that had there been policemen in those days, Jonah, on the mere suspicion of something wrong, had been arrested ere he touched a deck. How plainly he's a fugitive! no baggage, not a hat-box, valise, or carpet-bag, — no friends accompany him to the wharf with their adieux. At last, after much dodging search, he finds the Tarshish ship receiving the last items of her cargo; and as he steps on board to see its Captain in the cabin, all the sailors for the moment desist from hoisting in the goods, to mark the stranger's evil eye. Jonah sees this; but in vain he tries to look all ease and confidence; in vain essays his wretched smile. Strong intuitions of the man assure the mariners he can be no innocent. In their gamesome but still serious way, one whispers to the other — "Jack, he's robbed a widow"; or, "Joe, do you mark him; he's one of the missing murderers from Sodom." Another runs to read the bill that's stuck against the spile upon the wharf to which the ship is moored, offering five hundred gold coins for the apprehension of a parricide, and containing a description of his person. He reads, and looks from Jonah to the bill; while all his sympathetic shipmates now crowd round Jonah, prepared to lay their hands upon him. Frighted Jonah trembles, and summoning all his boldness to his face, only looks so much the more a coward. He will not confess himself suspected; but that itself is strong suspicion. So he makes the best of it; and when the sailors find him not to be the man that is advertised, they let him pass, and he descends into the cabin.

"Who's there?" cries the Captain at his busy desk, hurriedly making out his papers for the Customs — "Who's there?" Oh! how that harmless question mangles



Jonah! For the instant he almost turns to flee again. But he rallies. "I seek a passage in this ship to Tarshish; how soon sail ye, sir?" Thus far the busy Captain had not looked up to Jonah, though the man now stands before him; but no sooner does he hear that hollow voice, than he darts a scrutinizing glance. "We sail with the next coming tide," at last he slowly answered, still intently eyeing him. "No sooner, sir?" "Soon enough for any honest man that goes a passenger." Ha! Jonah, that's another stab. But he swiftly calls away the Captain from that scent. "I'll sail with ye," he says, "the passage money, how much is that? — I'll pay now." For it is particularly written, shipmates, as if it were a thing not to be overlooked in this history, "that he paid the fare thereof" ere the craft did sail. And taken with the context, **this is full of meaning.**

'Now Jonah's Captain, shipmates, was one whose discernment detects crime in any, but whose cupidity exposes it only in the penniless. In this world, shipmates, sin that pays its way can travel freely, and without a passport; whereas Virtue, if a pauper, is stopped at all frontiers. So Jonah's Captain prepares to test the length of Jonah's purse, ere he judge him openly. He charges him thrice the usual sum; and it's assented to. Then the Captain knows that Jonah is a fugitive; but at the same time resolves to help a flight that paves its rear with gold. Yet when Jonah fairly takes out his purse, prudent suspicions still molest the Captain. He rings every coin to find a counterfeit. Not a forger, anyway, he mutters; and Jonah is put down for his passage. "Point out my state-room, Sir," says Jonah now, "I'm travel-weary; I need sleep." "Thou look'st like it," says the Captain, "there's



thy room." Jonah enters, and would lock the door, but the lock contains no key. Hearing him foolishly fumbling there, the Captain laughs lowly to himself, and mutters something about the doors of convicts' cells being never allowed to be locked within. All dressed and dusty as he is, Jonah throws himself into his berth, and finds the little state-room ceiling almost resting on his forehead. The air is close, and Jonah gasps. Then, in that contracted hole, sunk, too, beneath the ship's water-line, Jonah feels the heralding presentiment of that stifling hour, when the whale shall hold him in the smallest of his bowels' wards.

'Screwed at its axis against the side, a swinging lamp slightly oscillates in Jonah's room; and the ship, heeling over towards the wharf with the weight of the last bales received, the lamp, flame and all, though in slight motion, still maintains a permanent obliquity with reference to the room; though, in truth, infallibly straight itself, it but made obvious the false, lying levels among which it hung. The lamp alarms and frightens Jonah; as lying in his berth his tormented eyes roll round the place, and this thus far successful fugitive finds no refuge for his restless glance. But that contradiction in the lamp more and more appals him. The floor, the ceiling, and the side, are all awry. "Oh! so my conscience hangs in me!" he groans, "straight upward, so it burns; but the chambers of my soul are all in crookedness!"

'Like one who after a night of drunken revelry hies to his bed, still reeling, but with conscience yet pricking him, as the plungings of the Roman race-horse but so much the more strike his steel tags into him; as one who in that miserable plight still turns and turns in giddy anguish, praying God for annihilation until the fit be passed; and



at last amid the whirl of woe he feels, a deep stupor steals over him, as over the man who bleeds to death, for conscience is the wound, and there's naught to staunch it; so, after sore wrestlings in his berth, Jonah's prodigy of ponderous misery drags him drowning down to sleep.

'And now the time of tide has come; the ship casts off her cables; and from the deserted wharf the uncheered ship for Tarshish, all careening, glides to sea. That ship, my friends, was the first of recorded smugglers! the contraband was Jonah. But the sea rebels; he will not bare the wicked burden. A dreadful storm comes on, the ship is like to break. But now when the boatswain calls all hands to lighten her; when boxes, bales, and jars are clattering overboard; when the wind is shrieking, and the men are yelling, and every plank thunders with trampling feet right over Jonah's head; in all this raging tumult, Jonah sleeps his hideous sleep. He sees no black sky and raging sea, feels not the reeling timbers, and little hears he or heeds he the far rush of the mighty whale, which even now with open mouth is cleaving the seas after him. Aye, shipmates, Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship a berth in the cabin as I have taken it, and was fast asleep. But the frightened master comes to him, and shrieks in his dead ear, "What meanest thou, O sleeper! arise!" Startled from his lethargy by that direful cry, Jonah staggers to his feet, and stumbling to the deck, grasps a shroud, to look out upon the sea. But at that moment he is sprung upon by a panther billow leaping over the bulwarks. Wave after wave thus leaps into the ship, and finding no speedy vent runs roaring fore and aft, till the mariners come nigh to drowning while yet afloat. And ever, as the white moon shows her affrighted face from



the steep gullies in the blackness overhead, aghast Jonah sees the rearing bowsprit pointing high upward, but soon beat downward again towards the tormented deep.

‘Terrors upon terrors run shouting through his soul. In all his cringing attitudes, the God-fugitive is now too plainly known. The sailors mark him; more and more certain grow their suspicions of him, and at last, fully to test the truth, by referring the whole matter to high Heaven, they fall to casting lots, to see for whose cause this great tempest was upon them. The lot is Jonah’s; that discovered, then how furiously they mob him with their questions. “What is thine occupation? Whence comest thou? Thy country? What people?” But mark now, my shipmates, the behavior of poor Jonah. The eager mariners but ask him who he is, and where from; whereas, they not only receive an answer to those questions, but likewise another answer to a question not put by them, but the unsolicited answer is forced from Jonah by the hard hand of God that is upon him.

“I am a Hebrew,” he cries — and then — “I fear the Lord the God of Heaven who hath made the sea and the dry land!” Fear him, O Jonah? Aye, well mightest thou fear the Lord God *then*! Straightway, he now goes on to make a full confession; whereupon the mariners became more and more appalled, but still are pitiful. For when Jonah, not yet supplicating God for mercy, since he but too well knew the darkness of his deserts, — when wretched Jonah cries out to them to take him and cast him forth into the sea, for he knew that for *his* sake this great tempest was upon them; they mercifully turn from him, and seek by other means to save the ship. But all in vain; the indignant gale howls louder; then, with one hand raised invok-



ingly to God, with the other they not unreluctantly lay hold of Jonah.

‘And now behold Jonah taken up as an anchor and dropped into the sea; when instantly an oily calmness floats out from the east, and the sea is still, as Jonah carries down the gale with him, leaving smooth water behind. He goes down in the whirling heart of such a masterless commotion that he scarce heeds the moment when he drops seething into the yawning jaws awaiting him; and the whale shoots to all his ivory teeth, like so many white bolts, upon his prison. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord out of the fish’s belly. But observe his prayer, and learn a weighty lesson. For sinful as he is, Jonah does not weep and wail for direct deliverance. He feels that his dreadful punishment is just. He leaves all his deliverance to God, contenting himself with this, that spite of all his pains and pangs, he will still look towards His holy temple. And here, shipmates, is true and faithful repentance; not clamorous for pardon, but grateful for punishment. And how pleasing to God was this conduct in Jonah, is shown in the eventual deliverance of him from the sea and the whale. Shipmates, I do not place Jonah before you to be copied for his sin but I do place him before you as a model for repentance. Sin not; but if you do, take heed to repent of it like Jonah.’

While he was speaking these words, the howling of the shrieking, slanting storm without seemed to add new power to the preacher, who, when describing Jonah’s sea-storm, seemed tossed by a storm himself. His deep chest heaved as with a ground-swell; his tossed arms seemed the warring elements at work; and the thunders that rolled away from off his swarthy brow, and the light leaping from his eye,



made all his simple hearers look on him with a quick fear that was strange to them.

There now came a lull in his look, as he silently turned over the leaves of the Book once more ; and, at last, standing motionless, with closed eyes, for the moment, seemed communing with God and himself.

But again he leaned over towards the people, and bowing his head lowly, with an aspect of the deepest yet manliest humility, he spake these words :

‘Shipmates, God has laid but one hand upon you ; both his hands press upon me. I have read ye by what murky light may be mine the lesson that Jonah teaches to all sinners ; and therefore to ye, and still more to me, for I am a greater sinner than ye. And now how gladly would I come down from this mast-head and sit on the hatches there where you sit, and listen as you listen, while some one of you reads *me* that other and more awful lesson which Jonah teaches to *me*, as a pilot of the living God. How being an anointed pilot-prophet, or speaker of true things, and bidden by the Lord to sound those unwelcome truths in the ears of a wicked Nineveh, Jonah, appalled at the hostility he should raise, fled from his mission, and sought to escape his duty and his God by taking ship at Joppa. But God is everywhere ; Tarshish he never reached. As we have seen, God came upon him in the whale, and swallowed him down to living gulfs of doom, and with swift slantings tore him along “into the midst of the seas,” where the eddyng depths sucked him ten thousand fathoms down, and “the weeds were wrapped about his head,” and all the watery world of woe bowled over him. Yet even then beyond the reach of any plummet — “out of the belly of hell” — when the whale grounded upon the ocean’s



utmost bones, even then, God heard the engulphed, repenting prophet when he cried. Then God spake unto the fish; and from the shuddering cold and blackness of the sea, the whale came breaching up towards the warm and pleasant sun, and all the delights of air and earth; and "vomited out Jonah upon the dry land"; when the word of the Lord came a second time; and Jonah, bruised and beaten — his ears, like two sea-shells, still multitudinously murmuring of the ocean — Jonah did the Almighty's bidding. And what was that, shipmates? To preach the Truth to the face of Falsehood! That was it!

'This, shipmates, this is that other lesson; and woe to that pilot of the living God who slights it. Woe to him who this world charms from Gospel duty! Woe to him who seeks to pour oil upon the waters when God has brewed them into a gale! Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appal! Woe to him whose good name is more to him than goodness! Woe to him who, in this world, courts not dishonor! Woe to him who would not be true, even though to be false were salvation! Yea, woe to him who, as the great Pilot Paul has it, while preaching to others is himself a castaway!'

He drooped and fell away from himself for a moment; then lifting his face to them again, showed a deep joy in his eyes, as he cried out with a heavenly enthusiasm, — 'But oh! shipmates! on the starboard hand of every woe, there is a sure delight; and higher the top of that delight, than the bottom of the woe is deep. Is not the main-truck higher than the kelson is low? Delight is to him — a far, far upward, and inward delight — who against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, ever stands forth his own inexorable self. Delight is to him whose strong arms



yet support him, when the ship of this base treacherous world has gone down beneath him. Delight is to him, who gives no quarter in the truth, and kills, burns, and destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of Senators and Judges. Delight, — top-gallant delight is to him, who acknowledges no law or lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to heaven. Delight is to him, whom all the waves of the billows of the seas of the boisterous mob can never shake from this sure Keel of the Ages. And eternal delight and deliciousness will be his, who coming to lay him down, can say with his final breath — O Father! — chiefly known to me by Thy rod — mortal or immortal, here I die. I have striven to be Thine, more than to be this world's, or mine own. Yet this is nothing: I leave eternity to Thee; for what is man that he should live out the lifetime of his God?'

He said no more, but slowly waving a benediction, covered his face with his hands, and so remained kneeling, till all the people had departed, and he was left alone in the place.



## CHAPTER IX

### A BOSOM FRIEND

RETURNING to the Spouter-Inn from the Chapel, I found Queequeg there quite alone: he having left the Chapel before the benediction some time. He was sitting on a bench before the fire, with his feet on the stove hearth, and in one hand was holding close up to his face that little negro idol of his; peering hard into its face, and with a jackknife gently whittling away at its nose, meanwhile humming to himself in his heathenish way.

But being now interrupted, he put up the image; and pretty soon, going to the table, took up a large book there, and placing it on his lap began counting the pages with deliberate regularity; at every fiftieth page — as I fancied — stopping for a moment, looking vacantly around him, and giving utterance to a long-drawn gurgling whistle of astonishment. He would then begin again at the next fifty; seeming to commence at number one each time, as though he could not count more than fifty, and it was only by such a large number of fifties being found together, that his astonishment at the multitude of pages was excited.

With much interest I sat watching him. Savage though he was, and hideously marred about the face — at least to my taste — his countenance yet had a something in it which was by no means disagreeable. You cannot hide the soul. Through all his unearthly tattooings, I thought I saw the traces of a simple honest heart; and in his large, deep



eyes, fiery black and bold, there seemed tokens of a spirit that would dare a thousand devils. And besides all this, there was a certain lofty bearing about the Pagan, which even his uncouthness could not altogether maim. He looked like a man who had never cringed and never had had a creditor. Whether it was, too, that his head being shaved, his forehead was drawn out in freer and brighter relief, and looked more expansive than it otherwise would, this I will not venture to decide; but certain it was his head was phrenologically an excellent one. It may seem ridiculous, but it reminded me of General Washington's head, as seen in the popular busts of him. It had the same long regularly graded retreating slope from above the brows, which were likewise very projecting, like two long promontories thickly wooded on top. Queequeg was George Washington cannibalistically developed.

Whilst I was thus closely scanning him, half pretending meanwhile to be looking out at the storm from the casement, he never heeded my presence, never troubled himself with so much as a single glance; but appeared wholly occupied with counting the pages of the marvellous book. Considering how sociably we had been sleeping together the night previous, and especially considering the affectionate arm I had found thrown over me upon waking in the morning, I thought this indifference of his very strange. But savages are strange beings; at times you do not know exactly how to take them. At first they are overawing; their calm self-collectedness of simplicity seems a Socratic wisdom. I had noticed also that Queequeg never consorted at all, or but very little, with the other seamen in the inn. He made no advances whatever; appeared to have no desire to enlarge the circle of his acquaintances. All



this struck me as mighty singular; yet, upon second thoughts, there was something almost sublime in it. Here was a man some twenty thousand miles from home, by the way of Cape Horn, that is — which was the only way he could get there — thrown among people as strange to him as though he were in the planet Jupiter; and yet he seemed entirely at his ease; preserving the utmost serenity; content with his own companionship; always equal to himself. Surely this was a touch of fine philosophy; though no doubt he had never heard there was such a thing as that. But, perhaps, to be true philosophers, we mortals should not be conscious of so living or so striving. So soon as I hear that such or such a man gives himself out for a philosopher, I conclude that, like the dyspeptic old woman, he must have ‘broken his digester.’

As I sat there in that now lonely room; the fire burning low, in that mild stage when, after its first intensity has warmed the air, it then only glows to be looked at; the evening shades and phantoms gathering round the casements, and peering in upon us silent, solitary twain; the storm booming without in solemn swells; I began to be sensible of strange feelings. I felt a melting in me. No more my splintered heart and maddened hand were turned against the wolfish world. This soothing savage had redeemed it. There he sat, his very indifference speaking a nature in which there lurked no civilized hypocrisies and bland deceptions. Wild he was; a very sight of sights to see; yet I began to feel myself mysteriously drawn towards him. And those same things that would have repelled most others, they were the very magnets that thus drew me. I’ll try a pagan friend, thought I, since Christian kindness has proved but hollow courtesy. I drew my bench near



him, and made some friendly signs and hints, doing my best to talk with him meanwhile. At first he little noticed these advances; but presently, upon my referring to his last night's hospitalities, he made out to ask me whether we were again to be bedfellows. I told him yes; whereat I thought he looked pleased, perhaps a little complimented.

We then turned over the book together, and I endeavored to explain to him the purpose of the printing, and the meaning of the few pictures that were in it. Thus I soon engaged his interest; and from that we went to jabbering the best we could about the various outer sights to be seen in this famous town. Soon I proposed a social smoke; and, producing his pouch and tomahawk, he quietly offered me a puff. And then we sat exchanging puffs from that wild pipe of his, and keeping it regularly passing between us.

If there yet lurked any ice of indifference towards me in the Pagan's breast, this pleasant, genial smoke we had, soon thawed it out, and left us cronies. He seemed to take to me quite as naturally and unbiddenly as I to him; and when our smoke was over, he pressed his forehead against mine, clasped me round the waist, and said that hence forth we were married; meaning, in his country's phrase, that we were bosom friends; he would gladly die for me, if need should be. In a countryman, this sudden flame of friendship would have seemed far too premature, a thing to be much distrusted; but in this simple savage those old rules would not apply.

After supper, and another social chat and smoke, we went to our room together. He made me a present of his embalmed head; took out his enormous tobacco wallet, and groping under the tobacco, drew out some thirty



dollars in silver; then spreading them on the table, and mechanically dividing them into two equal portions, pushed one of them towards me, and said it was mine. I was going to remonstrate; but he silenced me by pouring them into my trowsers' pockets. I let them stay. He then went about his evening prayers, took out his idol, and removed the paper firebrand. By certain signs and symptoms, I thought he seemed anxious for me to join him; but well knowing what was to follow, I deliberated a moment whether, in case he invited me, I would comply or otherwise.

I was a good Christian; born and bred in the bosom of the infallible Presbyterian Church. How then could I unite with this wild idolator in worshipping his piece of wood? But what is worship? thought I. Do you suppose now, Ishmael, that the magnanimous God of heaven and earth — pagans and all included — can possibly be jealous of an insignificant bit of black wood? Impossible! But what is worship? — to do the will of God? *that* is worship. And what is the will of God? — to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man to do to me — *that* is the will of God. Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in my particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn idolator. So I kindled the shavings; helped prop up the innocent little idol; offered him burnt biscuit with Queequeg; salamed before him twice or thrice; kissed his nose; and that done, we undressed and went to bed, at peace with our own consciences and all the world. But we did not go to sleep without some little chat.



## CHAPTER X

### NIGHTGOWN

WE had lain thus in bed, chatting and napping at short intervals, and Queequeg now and then affectionately throwing his brown tattooed legs over mine, and then drawing them back ; so entirely sociable and free and easy were we ; when, at last, by reason of our confabulations, what little nappishness remained in us altogether departed, and we felt like getting up again, though day-break was yet some way down the future.

Yes, we became very wakeful ; so much so that our recumbent position began to grow wearisome, and by little and little we found ourselves sitting up ; the clothes well tucked around us, leaning against the head-board with our four knees drawn up close together, and our two noses bending over them, as if our knee-pans were warming-pans. We felt very nice and snug, the more so since it was so chilly out of doors ; indeed out of bed-clothes too, seeing that there was no fire in the room. The more so, I say, because truly to enjoy bodily warmth, some small part of you must be cold, for there is no quality in this world that is not what it is merely by contrast. Nothing exists in itself. If you flatter yourself that you are all over comfortable, and have been so a long time, then you cannot be said to be comfortable any more. But if, like Queequeg and me in the bed, the tip of your nose or the crown of your head be slightly chilled, why then, indeed, in the general



consciousness you feel most delightfully and unmistakably warm. For this reason a sleeping apartment should never be furnished with a fire, which is one of the luxurious discomforts of the rich. For the height of this sort of deliciousness is to have nothing but the blanket between you and your snugness and the cold of the outer air. Then there you lie like the one warm spark in the heart of an arctic crystal.

We had been sitting in this crouching manner for some time, when all at once I thought I would open my eyes; for when between sheets, whether by day or by night, and whether asleep or awake, I have a way of always keeping my eyes shut, in order the more to concentrate the snugness of being in bed. Because no man can ever feel his own identity aright except his eyes be closed; as if darkness were indeed the proper element of our essences, though light be more congenial to our clayey part. Upon opening my eyes then, and coming out of my own pleasant and self-created darkness into the imposed and coarse outer gloom of the unilluminated twelve-o'clock-at-night, I experienced a disagreeable revulsion. Nor did I at all object to the hint from Queequeg that perhaps it were best to strike a light, seeing that we were so wide awake; and besides he felt a strong desire to have a few quiet puffs from his Tomahawk. Be it said, that though I had felt such a strong repugnance to his smoking in the bed the night before, yet see how elastic our stiff prejudices grow when once love comes to bend them. For now I liked nothing better than to have Queequeg smoking by me, even in bed, because he seemed to be full of such serene household joy then. I no more felt unduly concerned for the landlord's policy of insurance. I was only alive to the



condensed confidential comfortableness of sharing a pipe and a blanket with a real friend. With our shaggy jackets drawn about our shoulders, we now passed the Tomahawk from one to the other, till slowly there grew over us a blue hanging tester of smoke, illuminated by the flame of the new-lit lamp.

Whether it was that this undulating tester rolled the savage away to far distant scenes, I know not, but he now spoke of his native island; and, eager to hear his history, I begged him to go on and tell it. He gladly complied. Though at the time I but ill comprehended not a few of his words, yet subsequent disclosures, when I had become more familiar with his broken phraseology, now enable me to present the whole story such as it may prove in the mere skeleton I give.



## CHAPTER XI

### BIOGRAPHICAL

QUEEQUEG was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the West and South. It is not down in any map; true places never are.

When a new-hatched savage running wild about his native woodlands in a grass clout, followed by the nibbling goats, as if he were a green sapling; even then, in Queequeg's ambitious soul, lurked a strong desire to see something more of Christendom than a specimen whaler or two. His father was a High Chief, a King; his uncle a High Priest; and on the maternal side he boasted aunts who were the wives of unconquerable warriors. There was excellent blood in his veins — royal stuff; though sadly vitiated, I fear, by the cannibal propensity he nourished in his untutored youth.

A Sag Harbor ship visited his father's bay, and Queequeg sought a passage to Christian lands. But the ship, having her full complement of seamen, spurned his suit; and not all the King his father's influence could prevail. But Queequeg vowed a vow. Alone in his canoe, he paddled off to a distant strait, which he knew the ship must pass through when she quitted the island. On one side was a coral reef; on the other a low tongue of land, covered with mangrove thickets that grew out into the water. Hiding his canoe, still afloat, among these thickets, with its prow seaward, he sat down in the stern, paddle low in hand;



and when the ship was gliding by, like a flash he darted out; gained her side; with one backward dash of his foot capsized and sank his canoe; climbed up the chains; and throwing himself at full length upon the deck, grappled a ring-bolt there, and swore not to let it go, though hacked in pieces.

In vain the captain threatened to throw him overboard; suspended a cutlass over his naked wrists; Queequeg was the son of a King, and Queequeg budged not. Struck by his desperate dauntlessness, and his wild desire to visit Christendom, the captain at last relented, and told him he might make himself at home. But this fine young savage — this sea Prince of Wales, never saw the Captain's cabin. They put him down among the sailors, and made a whaleman of him. But like Czar Peter content to toil in the shipyards of foreign cities, Queequeg disdained no seeming ignominy, if thereby he might happily gain the power of enlightening his untutored countrymen. For at bottom — so he told me — he was actuated by a profound desire to learn among the Christians, the arts whereby to make his people still happier than they were; and more than that, still better than they were. But, alas! the practices of whalers soon convinced him that even Christians could be both miserable and wicked; infinitely more so, than all his father's heathen. Arrived at last in old Sag Harbor; and seeing what the sailors did there; and then going on to Nantucket, and seeing how they spent their wages in *that* place also, poor Queequeg gave it up for lost. Thought he, it's a wicked world in all meridians; I'll die a pagan.

And thus an old idolator at heart, he yet lived among these Christians, wore their clothes, and tried to talk their



gibberish. Hence the queer ways about him, though now some time from home.

By hints I asked him whether he did not propose going back, and having a coronation; since he might now consider his father dead and gone, he being very old and feeble at the last accounts. He answered no, not yet; and added that he was fearful Christianity, or rather Christians, had unfitted him for ascending the pure and undefiled throne of thirty pagan Kings before him. But by and by, he said, he would return, — as soon as he felt himself baptized again. For the nonce, however, he proposed to sail about, and sow his wild oats in all four oceans. They had made a harpooneer of him, and that barbed iron was in lieu of a sceptre now.

I asked him what might be his immediate purpose, touching his future movements. He answered, to go to sea again, in his old vocation. Upon this, I told him that whaling was my own design, and informed him of my intention to sail out of Nantucket, as being the most promising port for an adventurous whaleman to embark from. He at once resolved to accompany me to that island, ship aboard the same vessel, get into the same watch, the same boat, the same mess with me, in short to share my every hap; with both my hands in his, boldly dip into the Potluck of both worlds. To all this I joyously assented; for besides the affection I now felt for Queequeg, he was an experienced harpooneer, and as such, could not fail to be of great usefulness to one, who, like me, was wholly ignorant of the mysteries of whaling, though well acquainted with the sea, as known to merchant seamen.

His story being ended with his pipe's last puff, we rolled over from each other, and very soon were sleeping.



## CHAPTER XII

### WHEELBARROW

NEXT morning, Monday, after disposing of the embalmed head to a barber, for a block, I settled my own and comrade's bill; using, however, my comrade's money. The grinning landlord, as well as the boarders, seemed amazingly tickled at the sudden friendship which had sprung up between me and Queequeg — especially as Peter Coffin's cock and bull stories about him had previously so much alarmed me concerning the very person whom I now companied with.

We borrowed a wheelbarrow, and embarking our things, including my own poor carpet-bag, and Queequeg's canvas sack and hammock, away we went down to the *Moss*, the little Nantucket packet schooner moored at the wharf. As we were going along the people stared; not at Queequeg so much — for they were used to seeing cannibals like him in their streets, — but at seeing him and me upon such confidential terms. But we heeded them not, going along wheeling the barrow by turns, and Queequeg now and then stopping to adjust the sheath on his harpoon barbs. I asked him why he carried such a troublesome thing with him ashore, and whether all whaling ships did not find their own harpoons. To this, in substance, he replied, that though what I hinted was true enough, yet he had a particular affection for his own harpoon, because it was of assured stuff, well tried in many a mortal combat, and



deeply intimate with the hearts of whales. In short, like many reapers and mowers, who go into the farmer's meadows armed with their own scythes — though in no wise obliged to furnish them — even so, Queequeg, for his own private reasons, preferred his own harpoon.

Shifting the barrow from my hand to his, he told me a funny story about the first wheelbarrow he had ever seen. It was in Sag Harbor. The owners of his ship, it seems, had lent him one, in which to carry his heavy chest to his boarding house. Not to seem ignorant about the thing — though in truth he was entirely so, concerning the precise way in which to manage the barrow — Queequeg puts his chest upon it; lashes it fast; and then shoulders the barrow and marches up the wharf. 'Why,' said I, 'Queequeg, you might have known better than that, one would think. Didn't the people laugh?'

Upon this, he told me another story. The people of his island of Rokovoko, it seems, at their wedding feasts express the fragrant water of young cocoanuts into a large stained calabash like a punchbowl; and this punchbowl always forms the great central ornament on the braided mat where the feast is held. Now a certain grand merchant ship once touched at Rokovoko, and its commander — from all accounts, a very stately punctilious gentleman, at least for a sea captain — this commander was invited to the wedding feast of Queequeg's sister, a pretty young princess just turned of ten. Well; when all the wedding guests were assembled at the bride's bamboo cottage, this Captain marches in, and being assigned the post of honor, placed himself over against the punchbowl, and between the High Priest and his majesty the King, Queequeg's father. Grace being said, — for those people have their



grace as well as we — though Queequeg told me that unlike us, who at such times look downwards to our platters, they, on the contrary, copying the ducks, glance upwards to the great Giver of all feasts — Grace, I say, being said, the High Priest opens the banquet by the immemorial ceremony of the island; that is, dipping his consecrated and consecrating fingers into the bowl before the blessed beverage circulates. Seeing himself placed next the Priest, and noting the ceremony, and thinking himself — being Captain of a ship — as having plain precedence over a mere island King, especially in the King's own house — the Captain coolly proceeds to wash his hands in the punch bowl; — taking it I suppose for a huge finger-glass. 'Now,' said Queequeg, 'what you tink now? — Didn't our people laugh?'

At last, passage paid, and luggage safe, we stood on board the schooner. Hoisting sail, it glided down the Acushnet river. On one side, New Bedford rose in terraces of streets, their ice-covered trees all glittering in the clear, cold air. Huge hills and mountains of casks on casks were piled upon her wharves, and side by side the world-wandering whale ships lay silent and safely moored at last; while from others came a sound of carpenters and coopers, with blended noises of fires and forges to melt the pitch, all betokening that new cruises were on the start; that one most perilous and long voyage ended, only begins a second; and a second ended, only begins a third, and so on, for ever and for aye. Such is the endlessness, yea, the intolerableness of all earthly effort.

Gaining the more open water, the bracing breeze waxed fresh; the little *Moss* tossed the quick foam from her bows, as a young colt his snortings. How I snuffed



that Tartar air! — how I spurned that turnpike earth! — that common highway all over dented with the marks of slavish heels and hoofs; and turned me to admire the magnanimity of the sea which will permit no records.

At the same foam-fountain, Queequeg seemed to drink and reel with me. His dusky nostrils swelled apart; he showed his filed and pointed teeth. On, on we flew; and our offing gained, the *Moss* did homage to the blast; ducked and dived her brows as a slave before the Sultan. Sideways leaning, we sideways darted: every ropeyarn tingling like a wire; the two tall masts buckling like Indian canes in land tornadoes. So full of this reeling scene were we, as we stood by the plunging bowsprit, that for some time we did not notice the jeering glances of the passengers, a lubber-like assembly, who marvelled that two fellow beings should be so companionable; as though a white man were anything more dignified than a white-washed negro. But there were some boobies and bumpkins there, who, by their intense greenness, must have come from the heart and centre of all verdure. Queequeg caught one of these young saplings mimicking him behind his back. I thought the bumpkin's hour of doom was come. Dropping his harpoon, the brawny savage caught him in his arms, and by an almost miraculous dexterity and strength, sent him high up bodily into the air; then slightly tapping his stern in mid-somerseset, the fellow landed with bursting lungs upon his feet, while Queequeg, turning his back upon him, lighted his tomahawk pipe and passed it to me for a puff.

'Capting! Capting!' yelled the bumpkin, running towards that officer; 'Capting, Capting, here's the devil.'

'Hallo, *you* sir,' cried the Captain, a gaunt rib of the sea,



stalking up to Queequeg, 'what in thunder do you mean by that? Don't you know you might have killed that chap?'

'What him say?' said Queequeg, as he mildly turned to me.

'He say,' said I, 'that you came near kill-e that man there,' pointing to the still shivering greenhorn.

'Kill-e,' cried Queequeg, twisting his tattooed face into an unearthly expression of disdain, 'ah! him bevy small-e fish-e; Queequeg no kill-e so small-e fish-e; Queequeg kill-e big whale!'

'Look you,' roared the Captain, 'I'll kill-e *you*, you cannibal, if you try any more of your tricks aboard here; so mind your eye.'

But it so happened just then, that it was high time for the Captain to mind his own eye. The prodigious strain upon the main-sail had parted the weather-sheet, and the tremendous boom was now flying from side to side, completely sweeping the entire after part of the deck. The poor fellow whom Queequeg had handled so roughly, was swept overboard; all hands were in a panic; and to attempt snatching at the boom to stay it, seemed madness. It flew from right to left, and back again, almost in one ticking of a watch, and every instant seemed on the point of snapping into splinters. Nothing was done, and nothing seemed capable of being done; those on deck rushed toward the bows, and stood eyeing the boom as if it were the lower jaw of an exasperated whale. In the midst of this consternation, Queequeg dropped deftly to his knees, and crawling under the path of the boom, whipped hold of a rope, secured one end to the bulwarks, and then flinging the other like a lasso, caught it round the boom



as it swept over his head, and at the next jerk, the spar was that way trapped, and all was safe. The schooner was run into the wind, and while the hands were clearing away the stern boat, Queequeg, stripped to the waist, darted from the side with a long living arc of a leap. For three minutes or more he was seen swimming like a dog, throwing his long arms straight out before him, and by turns revealing his brawny shoulders through the freezing foam. I looked at the grand and glorious fellow, but saw no one to be saved. The greenhorn had gone down. Shooting himself perpendicularly from the water, Queequeg now took an instant's glance around him, and seeming to see just how matters were, dived down and disappeared. A few minutes more, and he rose again, one arm still striking out, and with the other dragging a lifeless form. The boat soon picked them up. The poor bumpkin was restored. All hands voted Queequeg a noble trump; the captain begged his pardon. From that hour I clove to Queequeg like a barnacle; yea, till poor Queequeg took his last long dive.

Was there ever such unconsciousness? He did not seem to think that he at all deserved a medal from the Humane and Magnanimous Societies. He only asked for water — fresh water — something to wipe the brine off; that done, he put on dry clothes, lighted his pipe, and leaning against the bulwarks, and mildly eyeing those around him, seemed to be saying to himself — ‘It’s a mutual, joint-stock world, in all meridians. We cannibals must help these Christians.’



## CHAPTER XIII

### NANTUCKET

NOTHING more happened on the passage worthy the mentioning; so, after a fine run, we safely arrived in Nantucket.

Nantucket! Take out your map and look at it. See what a real corner of the world it occupies; how it stands there, away off shore, more lonely than the Eddystone lighthouse. Look at it — a mere hillock, and elbow of sand; all beach, without a background. There is more sand there than you would use in twenty years as a substitute for blotting paper. Some gamesome wights will tell you that they have to plant weeds there, they don't grow naturally; that they import Canada thistles; that they have to send beyond seas for a spile to stop a leak in an oil cask; that pieces of wood in Nantucket are carried about like bits of the true cross in Rome; that people there plant toadstools before their houses, to get under the shade in summer time; that one blade of grass makes an oasis, three blades in a day's walk a prairie; that they wear quicksand shoes, something like Laplander snow-shoes; that they are so shut up, belted about, every way inclosed, surrounded, and made an utter island of by the ocean, that to their very chairs and tables small clams will sometimes be found adhering, as to the backs of sea turtles. But these extravaganzas only show that Nantucket is no Illinois.



Look now at the wondrous traditional story of how this island was settled by the red-men. Thus goes the legend. In olden times an eagle swooped down upon the New England coast, and carried off an infant Indian in his talons. With loud lament the parents saw their child borne out of sight over the wide waters. They resolved



A VIEW OF NANTUCKET HARBOR IN 1840

Notice the man and woman on a captain's 'walk' waving farewell to a departing whaler.

to follow in the same direction. Setting out in their canoes, after a perilous passage they discovered the island, and there they found an empty ivory casket, — the poor little Indian's skeleton.

What wonder, then, that these Nantucketers, born on a beach, should take to the sea for a livelihood! They first caught crabs and quohogs in the sand; grown bolder, they waded out with nets for mackerel; more experienced, they pushed off in boats and captured cod; and at last, launching a navy of great ships on the sea, explored this watery



world; put an incessant belt of circumnavigations round it; peeped in at Behring's Straits; and in all seasons and all oceans declared everlasting war with the mightiest animated mass that has survived the flood; most monstrous and most mountainous! That Himmalehan, salt-sea Mastodon, clothed with such portentousness of unconscious power, that his very panics are more to be dreaded than his most fearless and malicious assaults!

And thus have these naked Nantucketers, these sea hermits, issuing from their ant-hill in the sea, overrun and conquered the watery world like so many Alexanders; parcelling out among them the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans, as the three pirate powers did Poland. Let America add Mexico to Texas, and pile Cuba upon Canada; let the English overswarm all India, and hang out their blazing banner from the sun; two thirds of this terraqueous globe are the Nantucketer's. For the sea is his; he owns it, as Emperors own empires; other seamen having but a right of way through it. Merchant ships are but extension bridges; armed ones but floating forts; even pirates and privateers, though following the sea as highwaymen the road, they but plunder other ships, other fragments of the land like themselves, without seeking to draw their living from the bottomless deep itself. The Nantucketer, he alone resides and riots on the sea; he alone, in Bible language, goes down to it in ships; to and fro ploughing it as his own special plantation. *There* is his home; *there* lies his business, which a Noah's flood would not interrupt, though it overwhelmed all the millions in China. He lives on the sea, as prairie cocks in the prairie; he hides among the waves, he climbs them as chamois hunters climb the Alps. For years he knows not



the land ; so that when he comes to it at last, it smells like another world, more strangely than the moon would to an Earthsman. With the landless gull, that at sunset folds her wings and is rocked to sleep between billows ; so at nightfall, the Nantucketer, out of sight of land, furls his sails, and lays him to his rest, while under his very pillow rush herds of walruses and whales.



## CHAPTER XIV

### CHOWDER

It was quite late in the evening when the little *Moss* came snugly to anchor, and Queequeg and I went ashore ; so we could attend to no business that day, at least none but a supper and a bed. The landlord of the Spouter-Inn had recommended us to his cousin Hosea Hussey of the Try Pots, whom he asserted to be the proprietor of one of the best kept hotels in all Nantucket, and moreover he had assured us that Cousin Hosea, as he called him, was famous for his chowders. In short, he plainly hinted that we could not possibly do better than try pot-luck at the Try Pots. But the directions he had given us about keeping a yellow warehouse on our starboard hand till we opened a white church to the larboard, and then keeping that on the larboard hand till we made a corner three points to the starboard, and that done, then ask the first man we met where the place was : these crooked directions of his very much puzzled us at first, especially as, at the outset, Queequeg insisted that the yellow warehouse — our first point of departure — must be left on the larboard hand, whereas I had understood Peter Coffin to say it was on the starboard. However, by dint of beating about a little in the dark, and now and then knocking up a peaceful inhabitant to inquire the way, we at last came to something which there was no mistaking.



Two enormous wooden pots painted black, and suspended by asses' ears, swung from the cross-trees of an old top-mast, planted in front of an old doorway. The horns of the cross-trees were sawed off on the other side, so that this old top-mast looked not a little like a gallows. Perhaps I was over sensitive to such impressions at the time, but I could not help staring at this gallows with a vague mis-giving. A sort of crick was in my neck as I gazed up to the two remaining horns; yes, *two* of them, one for Queequeg, and one for me. It's ominous, thinks I. A Coffin my Innkeeper upon landing in my first whaling port; tombstones staring at me in the whalemens' chapel; and here a gallows! and a pair of prodigious black pots too! Are these last throwing out oblique hints touching Tophet?

I was called from these reflections by the sight of a freckled woman with yellow hair and a yellow gown, standing in the porch of the inn, under a dull red lamp swinging there, that looked much like an injured eye, and carrying on a brisk scolding with a man in a purple woolen shirt.

'Get along with ye,' said she to the man, 'or I'll be combing ye!'

'Come on, Queequeg,' said I, 'all right. There's Mrs. Hussey.'

And so it turned out; Mr. Hosea Hussey being from home, but leaving Mrs. Hussey entirely competent to attend to all his affairs. Upon making known our desires for a supper and a bed, Mrs. Hussey, postponing further scolding for the present, ushered us into a little room, and seating us at a table spread with the relics of a recently concluded repast, turned round to us and said — 'Clam or Cod?'



‘What’s that about Cods, ma’am?’ said I, with much politeness.

‘Clam or Cod?’ she repeated.

‘A clam for supper? a cold clam; is *that* what you mean, Mrs. Hussey?’ says I; ‘but that’s a rather cold and clammy reception in the winter time, ain’t it, Mrs. Hussey?’

But being in a great hurry to resume scolding the man in the purple shirt, who was waiting for it in the entry, and seeming to hear nothing but the word ‘clam,’ Mrs. Hussey hurried towards an open door leading to the kitchen, and bawling out ‘clam for two,’ disappeared.

‘Queequeg,’ said I, ‘do you think, that we can make out a supper for us both on one clam?’

However, a warm savory steam from the kitchen served to belie the apparently cheerless prospect before us. But when that smoking chowder came in, the mystery was delightfully explained. Oh! sweet friends, hearken to me. It was made of small juicy clams, scarcely bigger than hazel nuts, mixed with pounded ship biscuits, and salted pork cut up into little flakes; the whole enriched with butter, and plentifully seasoned with pepper and salt. Our appetites being sharpened by the frosty voyage, and in particular, Queequeg seeing his favourite fishing food before him, and the chowder being surpassingly excellent, we despatched it with great expedition: when leaning back a moment and bethinking me of Mrs. Hussey’s clam and cod announcement, I thought I would try a little experiment. Stepping to the kitchen door, I uttered the word ‘cod’ with great emphasis, and resumed my seat. In a few moments the savoury steam came forth again, but with a different flavor, and in good time a fine cod-chowder was placed before us.



We resumed business; and while plying our spoons in the bowl, thinks I to myself, I wonder now if this here has any effect on the head? What's that stultifying saying about chowderheaded people? 'But look, Queequeg, ain't that a live eel in your bowl? Where's your harpoon?'

Fishiest of all fishy places was the Try Pots, which well deserved its name; for the pots there were always boiling chowders. Chowder for breakfast, and chowder for dinner, and chowder for supper, till you began to look for fish-bones coming through your clothes. The area before the house was paved with clam-shells. Mrs. Hussey wore a polished necklace of codfish vertebra; and Hosea Hussey had his account books bound in superior old shark-skin. There was a fishy flavor to the milk, too, which I could not at all account for, till one morning happening to take a stroll along the beach among some fishermen's boats, I saw Hosea's brindled cow feeding on fish remnants, and marching along the sand with each foot in a cod's decapitated head, looking very slip-shod, I assure ye.

Supper concluded, we received a lamp, and directions from Mrs. Hussey concerning the nearest way to bed; but, as Queequeg was about to precede me up the stairs, the lady reached forth her arm, and demanded his harpoon; she allowed no harpoon in her chambers. 'Why not?' said I; 'every true whaleman sleeps with his harpoon — but why not?' 'Because it's dangerous,' says she. 'Ever since young Stiggs coming from that unfort'nt v'y'ge of his, when he was gone four years and a half, with only three barrels of *ile*, was found dead in my first floor back, with his harpoon in his side; ever since then I allow no boarders to take sich dangerous weepens in their rooms at night. So, Mr. Queequeg' (for she had learned his name), 'I will



just take this here iron, and keep it for you till morning. But the chowder; clam or cod to-morrow for breakfast, men?

‘Both,’ says I; ‘and let’s have a couple of smoked her-  
ring by way of variety.’



## CHAPTER XV

### THE SHIP

IN bed we concocted our plans for the morrow. But to my surprise and no small concern, Queequeg now gave me to understand, that he had been diligently consulting Yojo — the name of his black little god — and Yojo had told him two or three times over, and strongly insisted upon it everyway, that instead of our going together among the whaling-fleet in harbor, and in concert selecting our craft; instead of this, I say, Yojo earnestly enjoined that the selection of the ship should rest wholly with me, inasmuch as Yojo purposed befriending us; and, in order to do so, had already pitched upon a vessel, which, if left to myself, I, Ishmael, should infallibly light upon, for all the world as though it had turned out by chance; and in that vessel I must immediately ship myself, for the present irrespective of Queequeg.

I have forgotten to mention that, in many things, Queequeg placed great confidence in the excellence of Yojo's judgment and surprising forecast of things; and cherished Yojo with considerable esteem, as a rather good sort of god, who perhaps meant well enough upon the whole, but in all cases did not succeed in his benevolent designs.

Now, this plan of Queequeg's, or rather Yojo's, touching the selection of our craft; I did not like that plan at all. I had not a little relied upon Queequeg's sagacity to point out the whaler best fitted to carry us and our fortunes



securely. But as all my remonstrances produced no effect upon Queequeg, I was obliged to acquiesce; and accordingly prepared to set about this business with a determined rushing sort of energy and vigor, that should quickly settle that trifling little affair. Next morning early, leaving Queequeg shut up with Yojo in our little bedroom — for it seemed that it was some sort of Lent or Ramadan, or day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer with Queequeg and Yojo that day; *how* it was I never could find out, for, though I applied myself to it several times, I never could master his liturgies and XXXIX Articles — leaving Queequeg, then, fasting on his tomahawk pipe, and Yojo warming himself at his sacrificial fire of shavings, I sallied out among the shipping. After much prolonged sauntering and many random inquiries, I learnt that there were three ships up for three-years' voyages — the *Devil-Dam*, the *Tit-bit*, and the *Pequod*. 'Devil-Dam' I do not know the origin of; 'Tit-bit' is obvious; 'Pequod,' you will no doubt remember, was the name of a celebrated tribe of Massachusetts Indians, now extinct as the ancient Medes. I peered and pryed about the *Devil-Dam*; from her, hopped over to the *Tit-bit*; and, finally, going on board the *Pequod*, looked around her for a moment, and then decided that this was the very ship for us.

You may have seen many a quaint craft in your day, for aught I know; — square-toed luggers; mountainous Japanese junks; butter-box galliots, and what not; but take my word for it, you never saw such a rare old craft as this same rare old *Pequod*. She was a ship of the old school, rather small if anything; with an old fashioned clawfooted look about her. Long seasoned and weather-stained in the typhoons and calms of all four oceans, her old



hull's complexion was darkened like a French grenadier's, who has alike fought in Egypt and Siberia. Her venerable bows looked bearded. Her masts — cut somewhere on the coast of Japan, where her original ones were lost overboard in a gale — her masts stood stiffly up like the spines



*THE CHARLES W. MORGAN*

The last of the old whalers now rests in a stone cradle on Colonel Greene's estate in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

of the three old kings of Cologne. Her ancient decks were worn and wrinkled, like the pilgrim-worshipped flag-stone in Canterbury Cathedral where Becket bled. But to all these her old antiquities, were added new and marvellous features, pertaining to the wild business that for more than half a century she had followed. Old



Captain Peleg, many years her chief mate, before he commanded another vessel of his own, and now a retired seaman, and one of the principal owners of the *Pequod*, — this old Peleg, during the term of his chief-mateship, had built upon her original grotesqueness. She was apparelled like any barbaric Ethiopian emperor, his neck heavy with pendants of polished ivory. She was a thing of trophies. A cannibal of a craft, tricking herself forth in the chased bones of her enemies. All round, her unpanelled, open bulwarks were garnished like one continuous jaw, with the long sharp teeth of the sperm whale, inserted there for pins, to fasten her old hempen thews and tendons to. Those thews ran not through base blocks of land wood, but deftly travelled over sheaves of sea-ivory. Scorning a turnstile wheel at her reverend helm, she sported there a tiller; and that tiller was in one mass, curiously carved from the long narrow lower jaw of her hereditary foe. The helmsman who steered by that tiller in a tempest, felt like the Tartar, when he holds back his fiery steed by clutching its jaw. A noble craft, but somehow a most melancholy! All noble things are touched with that.

Now when I looked about the quarter-deck, for some one having authority, in order to propose myself as a candidate for the voyage, at first I saw nobody; but I could not well overlook a strange sort of tent, or rather wigwam, pitched a little behind the main-mast. It seemed only a temporary erection used in port. It was of a conical shape, some ten feet high; consisting of the long, huge slabs of limber black bone taken from the middle and highest part of the jaws of the right-whale. Planted with their broad ends on the deck, a circle of these slabs laced together, mutually sloped towards each other, and at the



apex united in a tufted point, where the loose hairy fibres waved to and fro like the top-knot on some old Pottowottamie Sachem's head. A triangular opening faced towards the bows of the ship, so that the insider commanded a complete view forward.

And half concealed in this queer tenement, I at length found one who by his aspect seemed to have authority; and who, it being noon, and the ship's work suspended, was now enjoying respite from the burden of command. He was seated on an old-fashioned oaken chair, wriggling all over with curious carving; and the bottom of which was formed of a stout interlacing of the same elastic stuff of which the wigwam was constructed.

There was nothing so very particular, perhaps, about the appearance of the elderly man I saw; he was brown and brawny, like most old seamen, and heavily rolled up in blue pilot-cloth, cut in the Quaker style; only there was a fine and almost microscopic net-work of the minutest wrinkles interlacing round his eyes, which must have arisen from his continual sailings in many hard gales, and always looking to windward; — for this causes the muscles about the eyes to become pursed together. Such eye-wrinkles are very effectual in a scowl.

'Is this the Captain of the *Pequod*?' said I, advancing to the door of the tent.

'Supposing it be the Captain of the *Pequod*, what dost thou want of him?' he demanded.

'I was thinking of shipping.'

'Thou wast, wast thou? I see thou art no Nantucketer — ever been in a stove boat?'

'No, Sir, I never have.'

'Dost know nothing at all about whaling, I dare say — eh?'



‘Nothing, Sir; but I have no doubt I shall soon learn. I’ve been several voyages in the merchant service, and I think that ——’

‘Merchant service be damned. Talk not that lingo to me. Dost see that leg? — I’ll take that leg away from thy stern, if ever thou talkest of the marchant service to me again. Marchant service indeed! I suppose now ye feel considerable proud of having served in those marchant ships. But flukes! man, what makes thee want to go a whaling, eh? — it looks a little suspicious, don’t it, eh? — Hast not been a pirate, hast thou? — Didst not rob thy last Captain, didst thou? — Dost not think of murdering the officers when thou gettest to sea?’

I protested my innocence of these things. I saw that under the mask of these half humorous innuendoes, this old seaman, as an insulated Quakerish Nantucketer, was full of his insular prejudices, and rather distrustful of all aliens, unless they hailed from Cape Cod or the Vineyard.

‘But what takes thee a-whaling? I want to know that before I think of shipping ye.’

‘Well, sir, I want to see what whaling is. I want to see the world.’

‘Want to see what whaling is, eh? Have ye clapped eye on Captain Ahab?’

‘Who is Captain Ahab, sir?’

‘Aye, aye, I thought so. Captain Ahab is the Captain of this ship.’

‘I am mistaken then. I thought I was speaking to the Captain himself.’

‘Thou art speaking to Captain Peleg — that’s who ye are speaking to, young man. It belongs to me and Captain Bildad to see the *Pequod* fitted out for the voyage, and



supplied with all her needs, including crew. We are part owners and agents. But as I was going to say, if thou wantest to know what whaling is, as thou tellest ye do, I can put ye in a way of finding it out before ye bind yourself to it, past backing out. Clap eye on Captain Ahab, young man, and thou wilt find that he has only one leg.'

'What do you mean, sir? Was the other one lost by a whale?'

'Lost by a whale! Young man, come nearer to me: it was devoured, chewed up, crunched by the monstrousest parmacetty that ever chipped a boat! — ah, ah!'

I was a little alarmed by his energy, perhaps also a little touched at the hearty grief in his concluding exclamation, but said as calmly as I could, 'What you say is no doubt true enough, sir; but how could I know there was any peculiar ferocity in that particular whale, though indeed I might have inferred as much from the simple fact of the accident.'

'Look ye now, young man, thy lungs are a sort of soft, d'ye see; thou dost not talk shark a bit. *Sure*, ye've been to sea before now; sure of that?'

'Sir,' said I, 'I thought I told you that I had been four voyages in the merchant —'

'Hard down out of that! Mind what I said about the marchant service — don't aggravate me — I won't have it. But let us understand each other. I have given thee a hint about what whaling is; do ye yet feel inclined for it?'

'I do, sir.'

'Very good. Now, art thou the man to pitch a harpoon down a live whale's throat, and then jump after it? Answer, quick!'

'I am, sir, if it should be positively indispensable to do



so; not to be got rid of, that is; which I don't take to be the fact.'

'Good again. Now then, thou not only wantest to go a-whaling, to find out by experience what whaling is, but ye also want to go in order to see the world? Was not that what ye said? I thought so. Well then, just step forward there, and take a peep over the weather-bow, and then back to me and tell me what ye see there.'

For a moment I stood a little puzzled by this curious request, not knowing exactly how to take it, whether humorously or in earnest. But concentrating all his crow's feet into one scowl, Captain Peleg started me on the errand.

Going forward and glancing over the weather bow, I perceived that the ship swinging to her anchor with the flood-tide, was now obliquely pointing towards the open ocean. The prospect was unlimited, but exceedingly monotonous and forbidding; not the slightest variety that I could see.

'Well, what's the report?' said Peleg when I came back; 'what did ye see?'

'Not much,' I replied — 'nothing but water; considerable horizon though, and there's a squall coming up, I think.'

'Well, what dost thou think then of seeing the world? Do ye wish to go round Cape Horn to see any more of it, eh? Can't ye see the world where you stand?'

I was a little staggered, but go a-whaling I must, and I would; and the *Pequod* was as good a ship as any — I thought the best — and all this I now repeated to Peleg. Seeing me so determined, he expressed his willingness to ship me.



‘And thou mayest as well sign the papers right off,’ he added — ‘come along with ye.’ And so saying, he led the way below deck into the cabin.

Seated on the transom was what seemed to me a most uncommon and surprising figure. It turned out to be Captain Bildad, who along with Captain Peleg was one of the largest owners of the vessel: the other shares, as is sometimes the case in these ports, being held by a crowd of old annuitants; widows, fatherless children, and chancery wards; each owning about the value of a timber head, or a foot of plank, or a nail or two in the ship. People in Nantucket invest their money in whaling vessels, the same way that you do yours in approved state stocks bringing in good interest.

Now, Bildad, like Peleg, and indeed many other Nantucketers, was a Quaker, the island having been originally settled by that sect; and to this day its inhabitants in general retain in an uncommon measure the peculiarities of the Quaker, only variously and anomalously modified by things altogether alien and heterogeneous. For some of these same Quakers are the most sanguinary of all sailors and whale-hunters. They are fighting Quakers; they are Quakers with a vengeance.

Like Captain Peleg, Captain Bildad was a well-to-do, retired whaleman. But unlike Captain Peleg — who cared not a rush for what are called serious things, and indeed deemed those self-same serious things the veriest of all trifles — Captain Bildad had not only been originally educated according to the strictest sect of Nantucket Quakerism, but all his subsequent ocean life, and the sight of many lovely island creatures, round the Horn — all that had not moved this native born Quaker one single



jot, had not so much as altered one angle of his vest. Still, for all this immutableness, was there some lack of common consistency about worthy Captain Peleg. Though refusing, from conscientious scruples, to bear arms against land invaders, yet himself had illimitably invaded the Atlantic and Pacific; and though a sworn foe to human bloodshed, yet had he in his straight-bodied coat, spilled tuns upon tuns of leviathan gore. How now in the contemplative evening of his days, the pious Bildad reconciled these things in the reminiscence, I do not know; but it did not seem to concern him much, and very probably he had long since come to the sage and sensible conclusion that a man's religion is one thing, and this practical world quite another. This world pays dividends. Rising from a little cabin-boy in short clothes of the drabdest drab, to a harpooneer in a broad shadbellied waistcoat; from that becoming boat-header, chief mate, and captain, and finally a shipowner; Bildad, as I hinted before, had concluded his adventurous career by wholly retiring from active life at the goodly age of sixty, and dedicating his remaining days to the quiet receiving of his well-earned income.

Now Bildad, I am sorry to say, had the reputation of being an incorrigible old hunk, and in his sea-going days, a bitter, hard task-master. They told me in Nantucket, though it certainly seems a curious story, that when he sailed the old *Categut* whaleman, his crew, upon arriving home, were mostly all carried ashore to the hospital, sore exhausted and worn out. For a pious man, especially for a Quaker, he was certainly rather hard-hearted, to say the least. He never used to swear, though, at his men, they said; but somehow he got an inordinate quantity of cruel, unmitigated hard work out of them. When Bildad was a



chief mate, to have his drab-colored eye intently looking at you, made you feel completely nervous, till you could clutch something — a hammer or a marlingspike, and go to work like mad, at something or other, never mind what. Indolence and idleness perished from before him. His own person was the exact embodiment of his utilitarian character. On his long, gaunt body, he carried no spare flesh, no superfluous beard, his chin having a soft, economical nap to it, like the worn nap of his broad-brimmed hat.

Such, then, was the person that I saw seated on the transom when I followed Captain Peleg down into the cabin. The space between the decks was small; and there, bolt upright, sat old Bildad, who always sat so, and never leaned, and this to save his coat-tails. His broad-brim was placed beside him; his legs were stiffly crossed; his drab vesture was buttoned up to his chin; and spectacles on nose, he seemed absorbed in reading from a ponderous volume.

‘Bildad,’ cried Captain Peleg, ‘at it again, Bildad, eh? Ye have been studying those Scriptures, now, for the last thirty years, to my certain knowledge. How far ye got, Bildad?’

As if long habituated to such profane talk from his old shipmate, Bildad, without noticing his present irreverence, quietly looked up, and seeing me, glanced again inquiringly towards Peleg.

‘He says he’s our man, Bildad,’ said Peleg, ‘he wants to ship.’

‘Dost thee?’ said Bildad, in a hollow tone, and turning round to me.

‘I *dost*,’ I said unconsciously, he was so intense a Quaker.

‘What do ye think of him, Bildad?’ said Peleg.



‘He’ll do,’ said Bildad, eyeing me, and then went on spelling away at his book in a mumbling tone quite audible.

I thought him the queerest old Quaker I ever saw, especially as Peleg, his friend and old shipmate, seemed such a blusterer. But I said nothing, only looking round me sharply. Peleg now threw open a chest, and drawing forth the ship’s articles, placed pen and ink before him, and seated himself at a little table. I began to think it was high time to settle with myself at what terms I would be willing to engage for the voyage. I was already aware that in the whaling business they paid no wages; but all hands, including the captain, received certain shares of the profits called *lays*, and that these lays were proportioned to the degree of importance pertaining to the respective duties of the ship’s company. I was also aware that being a green hand at whaling, my own lay would not be very large; but considering that I was used to the sea, could steer a ship, splice a rope, and all that, I made no doubt that from all I had heard I should be offered at least the 275th lay — that is, the 275th part of the clear net proceeds of the voyage, whatever that might eventually amount to. And though the 275th lay was what they call a rather *long lay*, yet it was better than nothing; and if we had a lucky voyage, might pretty nearly pay for the clothing I would wear out on it, not to speak of my three years’ beef and board, for which I would not have to pay one stiver.

It might be thought that this was a poor way to accumulate a princely fortune — and so it was, a very poor way indeed. But I am one of those who never take on about princely fortunes, and am quite content if the world is ready to board and lodge me, while I am putting up at this



grim sign of the Thunder Cloud. Upon the whole, I thought the 275th lay would be about the fair thing, but would not have been surprised had I been offered the 200th, considering I was of a broad-shouldered make.

But one thing, nevertheless, that made me a little distrustful about receiving a generous share of the profits was this: ashore, I had heard something of both Captain Peleg and his unaccountable old crony Bildad: how that they being the principal proprietors of the *Pequod*, therefore the other and more inconsiderable and scattered owners, left nearly the whole management of the ship's affairs to these two. And I did not know but what the stingy old Bildad might have a mighty deal to say about shipping hands, especially as I now found him on board the *Pequod*, quite at home there in the cabin, and reading his Bible as if at his own fireside. Now while Peleg was vainly trying to mend a pen with his jack knife, old Bildad, to my no small surprise, considering that he was such an interested party in these proceedings: Bildad never heeded us, but went on mumbling to himself out of his book, '*Lay* not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth —'

'Well, Captain Bildad,' interrupted Peleg, 'what d'ye say, what lay shall we give this young man?'

'Thou knowest best,' was the sepulchral reply, 'the seven hundred and seventy-seventh wouldn't be too much, would it? — "where moth and rust do corrupt, but *lay* —"'

*Lay*, indeed, thought I, and such a lay! the seven hundred and seventy-seventh! Well, old Bildad, you are determined that I, for one, shall not *lay* up many *lays* here below, where moth and rust do corrupt. It was an exceedingly *long lay* that, indeed; and though from the magni-



tude of the figure it might at first deceive a landsman, yet the slightest consideration will show that though seven hundred and seventy-seven is a pretty large number, yet, when you come to make a *teenth* of it, you will then see, I say, that the seven hundred and seventy-seventh part of a farthing is a good deal less than seven hundred and seventy-seven gold doubloons ; and so I thought at the time.

‘Why, blast your eyes, Bildad,’ cried Peleg, ‘thou dost not want to swindle this young man ! he must have more than that.’

‘Seven hundred and seventy-seventh,’ again said Bildad, without lifting his eyes ; and then went on mumbling — ‘for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’

‘I am going to put him down for the three hundredth,’ said Peleg, ‘do ye hear that, Bildad ! The three hundredth lay, I say.’

Bildad laid down his book, and turning solemnly towards him said, ‘Captain Peleg, thou hast a generous heart ; but thou must consider the duty thou owest to the other owners of this ship — widows and orphans, many of them — and that if we too abundantly reward the labors of this young man, we may be taking the bread from those widows and those orphans. The seven hundred and seventy-seventh lay, Captain Peleg.’

‘Thou Bildad !’ roared Peleg, starting up and clattering about the cabin. ‘Blast ye, Captain Bildad, if I had followed thy advice in these matters, I would afore now had a conscience to lug about that would be heavy enough to founder the largest ship that ever sailed round Cape Horn.’

‘Captain Peleg,’ said Bildad steadily, ‘thy conscience may be drawing ten inches of water, or ten fathoms, I



can't tell; but as thou art still an impenitent man, Captain Peleg, I greatly fear lest thy conscience be but a leaky one; and will in the end sink thee foundering down to the fiery pit, Captain Peleg.'

'Fiery pit! fiery pit! ye insult me, man; past all natural bearing, ye insult me. It's an all-fired outrage to tell any human creature that he's bound to hell. Flukes and flames! Bildad, say that again to me, and start my soul-bolts, but I'll — I'll — yes, I'll swallow a live goat with all his hair and horns on. Out of the cabin, ye canting, drab-colored son of a wooden gun — a straight wake with ye!'

As he thundered out this he made a rush at Bildad, but with a marvellous oblique, sliding celerity, Bildad for that time eluded him.

Alarmed at this terrible outburst between the two principal and responsible owners of the ship, and feeling half a mind to give up all idea of sailing in a vessel so questionably owned and temporarily commanded, I stepped aside from the door to give egress to Bildad, who, I made no doubt, was all eagerness to vanish from before the awakened wrath of Peleg. But to my astonishment, he sat down again on the transom very quietly, and seemed to have not the slightest intention of withdrawing. He seemed quite used to impenitent Peleg and his ways. As for Peleg, after letting off his rage as he had, there seemed no more left in him, and he, too, sat down like a lamb, though he twitched a little as if still nervously agitated. 'Whew!' he whistled at last — 'the squall's gone off to leeward, I think. Bildad, thou used to be good at sharpening a lance, mend that pen, will ye. My jack-knife here needs the grindstone. That's he; thank ye, Bildad.



Now then, my young man, Ishmael's thy name, didn't ye say? Well then, down ye go here, Ishmael, for the three hundredth lay.'

'Captain Peleg,' said I, 'I have a friend with me who wants to ship too — shall I bring him down to-morrow?'

'To be sure,' said Peleg. 'Fetch him along, and we'll look at him.'

'What lay does he want?' groaned Bildad, glancing up from the book in which he had again been burying himself.

'Oh! never thee mind about that, Bildad,' said Peleg. 'Has he ever whaled it any?' turning to me.

'Killed more whales than I can count, Captain Peleg.'

'Well, bring him along then.'

And after signing the papers, off I went; nothing doubting but that I had done a good morning's work, and that the *Pequod* was the identical ship that Yojo had provided to carry Queequeg and me round the Cape.

But I had not proceeded far, when I began to bethink me that the Captain with whom I was to sail yet remained unseen by me; though, indeed, in many cases, a whale-ship will be completely fitted out, and receive all her crew on board, ere the captain makes himself visible by arriving to take command; for sometimes these voyages are so prolonged, and the shore intervals at home so exceedingly brief, that if the captain have a family, or any absorbing concernment of that sort, he does not trouble himself much about his ship in port, but leaves her to the owners till all is ready for sea. However, it is always as well to have a look at him before irrevocably committing yourself into his hands. Turning back I accosted Captain Peleg, inquiring where Captain Ahab was to be found.



'And what dost thou want of Captain Ahab? It's all right enough; thou art shipped.'

'Yes, but I should like to see him.'

'But I don't think thou wilt be able to at present. I don't know exactly what's the matter with him; but he keeps close inside the house; a sort of sick, and yet he don't look so. In fact, he ain't sick; but no, he isn't well either. Any how, young man, he won't always see me, so I don't suppose he will thee. He's a queer man, Captain Ahab — so some think — but a good one. Oh, thou'lt like him well enough; no fear, no fear. He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man, Captain Ahab; doesn't speak much; but, when he does speak, then you may well listen. Mark ye, be forewarned; Ahab's above the common; Ahab's been in colleges, as well as 'mong the cannibals; been used to deeper wonders than the waves; fixed his fiery lance in mightier, stranger foes than whales. His lance! aye, the keenest and surest that out of all our isle! Oh! he ain't Captain Bildad; no, and he ain't Captain Peleg; *he's Ahab*, boy; and Ahab of old was a crowned king.'

'And a very vile one. When that wicked king was slain, the dogs, did they not lick his blood?'

'Come hither to me — hither, hither,' said Peleg, with a significance in his eye that almost startled me. 'Look ye, lad; never say that on board the *Pequod*. Never say it anywhere. Captain Ahab did not name himself. 'Twas a foolish, ignorant whim of his crazy, widowed mother, who died when he was only a twelvemonth old. And yet the old squaw Tistig, at Gayhead, said that the name would somehow prove prophetic. And, perhaps, other fools like her may tell thee the same. I wish to warn thee. It's a lie. I know Captain Ahab well; I've sailed with



him as mate years ago; I know what he is — a good man — not a pious, good man, like Bildad, but a swearing good man — something like me — only there's a good deal more of him. Aye, aye, I know that he was never very jolly; and I know that on the passage home, he was a little out of his mind for a spell; but it was the sharp shooting pains in his bleeding stump that brought that about, as any one might see. I know, too, that ever since he lost his leg last voyage by that accursed whale, he's been a kind of moody — desperate moody, and savage sometimes; but that will all pass off. And once for all, let me tell thee and assure thee, young man, it's better to sail with a moody good captain than a laughing bad one. So good-bye to thee — and wrong not Captain Ahab, because he happens to have a wicked name. Besides, my boy, he has a wife — not three voyages wedded — a sweet, resigned girl. Think of that; by that sweet girl that old man had a child: hold ye then there can be any harm in Ahab? No, no, my lad; stricken, blasted, if he be, Ahab has his humanities!'

As I walked away, I was full of thoughtfulness; what had been incidentally revealed to me of Captain Ahab, filled me with a certain wild vagueness of painfulness concerning him. And somehow, at the time, I felt a sympathy and a sorrow for him, but for I don't know what, unless it was the cruel loss of his leg. And yet I also felt a strange awe of him; but that sort of awe, which I cannot at all describe, was not exactly awe; I do not know what it was. But I felt it; and it did not disincline me towards him; though I felt impatience at what seemed like mystery in him, so imperfectly as he was known to me then. However, my thoughts were at length carried in other direction, so that for the present dark Ahab slipped my mind.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE RAMADAN

As Queequeg's Ramadan, or Fasting and Humiliation, was to continue all day, I did not choose to disturb him till towards night-fall; for I cherish the greatest respect towards everybody's religious obligations, never mind how comical, and could not find it in my heart to undervalue even a congregation of ants worshipping a toad-stool.

Towards evening, when I felt assured that all his performances and rituals must be over, I went up to his room and knocked at the door; but no answer. I tried to open it, but it was fastened inside. 'Queequeg,' said I softly through the key hole: all silent. 'I say, Queequeg! why don't you speak? It's I — Ishmael.' But all remained still as before. I began to grow alarmed. I had allowed him such abundant time; I thought he might have had an apoplectic fit. I looked through the key-hole; but the door opening into an odd corner of the room, the key-hole prospect was but a crooked and sinister one. I could only see part of the foot-board of the bed and a line of the wall, but nothing more. I was surprised to behold resting against the wall the wooden shaft of Queequeg's harpoon, which the landlady the evening previous had taken from him, before our mounting to the chamber. That's strange, thought I; but at any rate, since the harpoon stands yonder, and he seldom or never goes



abroad without it, therefore he must be inside here, and no possible mistake.

‘Queequeg! — Queequeg!’ — all still. Something must have happened. Apoplexy! I tried to burst open the door; but it stubbornly resisted. Running down stairs, I quickly stated my suspicions to the first person I met — the chambermaid. ‘La! la!’ she cried, ‘I thought something must be the matter. I went to make the bed after breakfast, and the door was locked; and not a mouse to be heard; and it’s been just so silent ever since. But I thought, may be, you had both gone off and locked your baggage in for safe keeping. La! La, ma’am! — Mistress! murder! Mrs. Hussey! apoplexy!’ — and with these cries she ran towards the kitchen, I following.

Mrs. Hussey soon appeared, with a mustard-pot in one hand and a vinegar-cruet in the other, having just broken away from the occupation of attending to the castors, and scolding her little black boy meantime.

‘Wood-house!’ cried I, ‘which way to it? Run for God’s sake, and fetch something to pry open the door — the axe! — the axe! — he’s had a stroke; depend upon it!’ — and so saying I was unmethodically rushing up stairs again empty-handed, when Mrs. Hussey interposed the mustard-pot and vinegar-cruet, and the entire castor of her countenance.

‘What’s the matter with you, young man?’

‘Get the axe! For God’s sake, run for the doctor, some one, while I pry it open!’

‘Look here,’ said the landlady, quickly putting down the vinegar-cruet, so as to have one hand free; ‘look here; are you talking about prying open any of my doors?’ — and with that she seized my arm. ‘What’s the



matter with you? What's the matter with you, ship-mate?'

In as calm, but rapid a manner as possible, I gave her to understand the whole case. Unconsciously clapping the vinegar-cruet to one side of her nose, she ruminated for an instant; then exclaimed — 'No! I haven't seen it since I put it there.' Running to a little closet under the landing of the stairs, she glanced in, and returning, told me that Queequeg's harpoon was missing. 'He's killed himself,' she cried. 'It's unfort'nate Stiggs done over again — there goes another counterpane — God pity his poor mother! — it will be the ruin of my house. Has the poor lad a sister? Where's that girl? — there, Betty, go to Snarles the Painter, and tell him to paint me a sign, with — "no suicides permitted here, and no smoking in the parlor"; — might as well kill both birds at once. Kill? The Lord be merciful to his ghost! What's that noise there? You, young man, avast there!'

And running after me, she caught me as I was again trying to force open the door.

'I won't allow it; I won't have my premises spoiled. Go for the locksmith, there's one about a mile from here. But avast!' putting her hand in her side pocket, 'here's a key that'll fit, I guess; let's see.' And with that, she turned it in the lock; but, alas! Queequeg's supplemental bolt remained unwithdrawn within.

'Have to burst it open,' said I, and was running down the entry a little, for a good start, when the landlady caught at me, again vowing I should not break down her premises; but I tore from her, and with a sudden bodily rush dashed myself full against the mark.

With a prodigious noise the door flew open, and the



knob slamming against the door, sent the plaster to the ceiling; and there, good heavens! there sat Queequeg, altogether cool and self-collected; right in the middle of the room; squatting on his hams, and holding Yojo on top of his head. He looked neither one way nor the other way, but sat like a carved image with scarce a sign of active life.

‘Queequeg,’ said I, going up to him, ‘Queequeg, what’s the matter with you?’

‘He hain’t been a sittin’ so all day, has he?’ said the landlady.

But all we said, not a word could we drag out of him; I almost felt like pushing him over, so as to change his position, for it was almost intolerable, it seemed so painfully and unnaturally constrained; especially, as in all probability he had been sitting so for upwards of eight or ten hours, going too without his regular meals.

‘Mrs. Hussey,’ said I, ‘he’s *alive* at all events; so leave us, if you please, and I will see to this strange affair myself.’

Closing the door upon the landlady, I endeavored to prevail upon Queequeg to take a chair; but in vain. There he sat; and for all my polite arts and blandishments, he would not move a peg, nor say a single word, not even look at me, nor notice my presence in even the slightest way.

I wonder, thought I, if this can possibly be a part of his Ramadan; do they fast on their hams that way in his native island. It must be so; yes, it’s a part of his creed, I suppose; well, then, let him rest; he’ll get up sooner or later, no doubt. It can’t last for ever, thank God, and his Ramadan only comes once a year; and I don’t believe it’s very punctual then.



I went down to supper. After sitting a long time listening to the long stories of some sailors who had just come from a plum-pudding voyage, as they called it (that is, a short whaling-voyage in a schooner or brig, confined to the north of the line, in the Atlantic Ocean only); after listening to these plum-puddingers till nearly eleven o'clock, I went up stairs to go to bed, feeling quite sure by this time Queequeg must certainly have brought his Ramadan to a termination. But no; there he was just where I had left him; he had not stirred an inch.

'For heaven's sake, Queequeg, get up and shake yourself; get up and have some supper. You'll starve; you'll kill yourself, Queequeg.' But not a word did he reply.

Despairing of him, therefore, I determined to go to bed and to sleep; and no doubt, before a great while, he would follow me. But previous to turning in, I took my heavy bearskin jacket, and threw it over him, as it promised to be a very cold night; and he had nothing but his ordinary round jacket on. For some time, do all I would, I could not get into the faintest doze. I had blown out the candle; and the mere thought of Queequeg — not four feet off — sitting there in that uneasy position, stark alone in the cold and dark; this made me really wretched. Think of it; sleeping all night in the same room with a wide awake pagan on his hams in this dreary, unaccountable Ramadan!

But somehow I dropped off at last, and knew nothing more till break of day; when, looking over the bedside, there squatted Queequeg, as if he had been screwed down to the floor. But as soon as the first glimpse of sun entered the window, up he got, with stiff and grating joints, but with a cheerful look; limped towards me where I lay;



pressed his forehead again against mine; and said his Ramadan was over.

Now, as I before hinted, I have no objection to any person's religion, be it what it may, so long as that person does not kill or insult any other person, because that other person does not believe it also. But when a man's religion becomes really frantic; when it is a positive torment to him; and, in fine, makes this earth of ours an uncomfortable inn to lodge in; then I think it high time to take that individual aside and argue the point with him.

And just so I now did with Queequeg. 'Queequeg,' said I, 'get into bed now, and lie and listen to me.' I then went on, beginning with the rise and progress of the primitive religions, and coming down to the various religions of the present time, during which time I labored to show Queequeg that all these Lents, Ramadans, and prolonged hamsquattings in cold, cheerless rooms were stark nonsense; bad for the health; useless for the soul; opposed, in short, to the obvious laws of Hygiene and common sense.

I then asked Queequeg whether he himself was ever troubled with dyspepsia; expressing the idea very plainly, so that he could take it in. He said no; only upon one memorable occasion. It was after a great feast given by his father the king, on the gaining of a great battle wherein fifty of the enemy had been killed by about two o'clock in the afternoon, and all cooked and eaten that very evening.

'No more, Queequeg,' said I, shuddering; 'that will do'; for I knew the inferences without his further hinting them. I had seen a sailor who had visited that very island, and he told me that it was the custom, when a great battle had been gained there, to barbecue all the



slain in the yard or garden of the victor; and then, one by one, they were placed in great wooden trenchers, and garnished round like a pilau, with breadfruit and cocoanuts; and with some parsley in their mouths, were sent round with the victor's compliments to all his friends, just as though these presents were so many Christmas turkeys.

At last we rose and dressed; and Queequeg, taking a prodigious hearty breakfast of chowders of all sorts, so that the landlady should not make much profit by reason of his Ramadan, we sallied out to board the *Pequod*, sauntering along, and picking our teeth with halibut bones.



## CHAPTER XVII

### HIS MARK

As we were walking down the end of the wharf towards the ship, Queequeg carrying his harpoon, Captain Peleg in his gruff voice loudly hailed us from his wigwam, saying he had not suspected my friend was a cannibal, and furthermore announcing that he let no cannibals on board that craft, unless they previously produced their papers.

‘What do you mean by that, Captain Peleg?’ said I, now jumping on the bulwarks, and leaving my comrade standing on the wharf.

‘I mean,’ he replied, ‘he must show his papers.’

‘Yea,’ said Captain Bildad in his hollow voice, sticking his head from behind Peleg’s, out of the wigwam. ‘He must show that he’s converted. Son of darkness,’ he added, turning to Queequeg, ‘art thou at present in communion with any Christian church?’

‘Why,’ said I, ‘he’s a member of the first Congregational Church.’ Here be it said, that many tattooed savages sailing in Nantucket ships at last come to be converted into the churches.

‘First Congregational Church,’ cried Bildad, ‘what! that worships in Deacon Deuteronomy Coleman’s meeting-house?’ and so saying, taking out his spectacles, he rubbed them with his great yellow bandana handkerchief, and putting them on very carefully, came out of the



wigwam, and leaning stiffly over the bulwarks, took a good long look at Queequeg.

'How long hath he been a member?' he then said, turning to me; 'not very long, I rather guess, young man.'

'No,' said Peleg, 'and he hasn't been baptized right either, or it would have washed some of that devil's blue off his face.'

'Do tell, now,' cried Bildad, 'is this Philistine a regular member of Deacon Deuteronomy's meeting? I never saw him going there, and I pass it every Lord's day.'

'I don't know anything about Deacon Deuteronomy or his meeting,' said I, 'all I know is, that Queequeg here is a born member of the First Congregational Church. He is a deacon himself, Queequeg is.'

'Young man,' said Bildad sternly, 'thou art skylarking with me — explain thyself, thou young Hittite. What church dost thee mean? answer me.'

Finding myself thus hard pushed, I replied. 'I mean, sir, the same ancient Catholic Church to which you and I, and Captain Peleg there, and Queequeg here, and all of us, and every mother's son and soul of us belong; the great and everlasting First Congregation of this whole worshipping world; we all belong to that; only some of us cherish some crotchets noways touching the grand belief; in *that* we all join hands.'

'Splice, thou mean'st *splice* hands,' cried Peleg, drawing nearer. 'Young man, you'd better ship for a missionary, instead of a fore-mast hand; I never heard a better sermon. Deacon Deuteronomy — why Father Mapple himself couldn't beat it, and he's reckoned something. Come aboard, come aboard; never mind about the papers. I say, tell Quohog there — what's that you call him? tell



Quohog to step along. By the great anchor, what a harpoon he's got there! looks like good stuff that; and he handles it about right. I say, Quohog, or whatever your name is, did you ever stand in the head of a whale-boat? did you ever strike a fish?'

Without saying a word, Queequeg, in his wild sort of way, jumped upon the bulwarks, from thence into the bows of one of the whale-boats hanging to the side; and then bracing his left knee, and poising his harpoon, cried out in some such way as this: —

'Cap'ain, you see him small drop tar on water dere? You see him? well, spose him one whale eye, well, den!' and taking sharp aim at it, he darted the iron right over old Bildad's broad brim, clean across the ship's decks, and struck the glistening tar spot out of sight.

'Now,' said Queequeg, quietly hauling in the line, 'spos-ee him whale-e eye; why, dad whale dead.'

'Quick, Bildad,' said Peleg, his partner, who, aghast at the close vicinity of the flying harpoon, had retreated towards the cabin gangway. 'Quick, I say, you Bildad, and get the ship's papers. We must have Hedgehog there, I mean Quohog, in one of our boats. Look ye, Quohog, we'll give ye the ninetieth lay, and that's more than ever was given a harpooneer yet out of Nantucket.'

So down we went into the cabin, and to my great joy Queequeg was soon enrolled among the same ship's company to which I myself belonged.

When all preliminaries were over and Peleg had got everything ready for signing, he turned to me and said, 'I guess, Quohog there don't know how to write, does he? I say, Quohog, blast ye! dost thou sign thy name or make thy mark?'



But at this question, Queequeg, who had twice or thrice before taken part in similar ceremonies, looked no ways abashed; but taking the offered pen, copied upon the paper, in the proper place, an exact counterpart of a queer round figure which was tattooed upon his arm: so that through Captain Peleg's obstinate mistake touching his appellative, it stood something like this: —

Quohog.

his  mark.

Meanwhile Captain Bildad sat earnestly and steadfastly eyeing Queequeg, and at last rising solemnly and fumbling in the huge pockets of his broad-skirted drab coat, took out a bundle of tracts, and selecting one entitled *The Latter Day Coming; or No Time to Lose*, placed it in Queequeg's hands, and then grasping them and the book with both his, looked earnestly into his eyes, and said, 'Son of darkness, I must do my duty by thee; I am part owner of this ship, and feel concerned for the souls of all its crew; if thou still clingest to thy Pagan ways, which I sadly fear, I beseech thee, remain not for aye a Belial bondsman. Spurn the idol Bell, and the hideous dragon; turn from the wrath to come; mind thine eye, I say; oh! goodness gracious! steer clear of the fiery pit!'

Something of the salt sea yet lingered in old Bildad's language, heterogeneously mixed with Scriptural and domestic phrases.

'Avast there, avast there, Bildad, avast now spoiling our harpooneer,' cried Peleg. 'Pious harpooneers never make good voyagers — it takes the shark out of 'em; no harpooneer is worth a straw who ain't pretty sharkish. There was young Nat Swaine, once the bravest boat-header out of all Nantucket and the Vineyard; he joined the



meeting, and never came to good. He got so frightened about his plaguy soul, that he shrunk and sheered away from whales, for fear of afterclaps, in case he got stove and went to Davy Jones.'

'Peleg! Peleg!' said Bildad, lifting his eyes and hands, 'thou thyself, as I myself, hast seen many a perilous time; thou knowest, Peleg, what it is to have the fear of death; how, then, can'st thou prate in this ungodly guise. Thou beliest thine own heart, Peleg. Tell me, when this same *Pequod* here had her three masts overboard in that typhoon on Japan, that same voyage when thou went mate with Captain Ahab, did'st thou not think of Death and the Judgment then?'

'Hear him, hear him now,' cried Peleg, marching across the cabin, and thrusting his hands far down into his pockets, — 'hear him, all of ye. Think of that! When every moment we thought the ship would sink! Death and the Judgment then? What? With all three masts making such an everlasting thundering against the side; and every sea breaking over us, fore and aft. Think of Death and the Judgment then? No! no time to think about Death then. Life was what Captain Ahab and I was thinking of; and how to save all hands — how to rig jury-masts — how to get into the nearest port; that was what I was thinking of.'

Bildad said no more, but buttoning up his coat, stalked on deck, where we followed him. There he stood, very quietly overlooking some sailmakers who were mending a top-sail in the waist. Now and then he stooped to pick up a patch, or save an end of the tarred twine, which otherwise might have been wasted.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE PROPHET

‘SHIPMATES, have ye shipped in that ship?’

Queequeg and I had just left the *Pequod*, and were sauntering away from the water, for the moment each occupied with his own thoughts, when the above words were put to us by a stranger, who, pausing before us, levelled his massive forefinger at the vessel in question. He was but shabbily apparelled in faded jacket and patched trowsers, a rag of a black handkerchief investing his neck. A confluent small-pox had in all directions flowed over his face, and left it like the complicated ribbed bed of a torrent, when the rushing waters have been dried up.

‘Have ye shipped in her?’ he repeated.

‘You mean the ship *Pequod*, I suppose,’ said I, trying to gain a little more time for an uninterrupted look at him.

‘Aye, the *Pequod* — that ship there,’ he said, drawing back his whole arm, and then rapidly shoving it straight out from him, with the fixed bayonet of his pointed finger darted full at the object.

‘Yes,’ said I, ‘we have just signed the articles.’

‘Anything down there about your souls?’

‘About what?’

‘Oh, perhaps you hav’n’t got any,’ he said quickly. ‘No matter though, I know many chaps that hav’n’t got any, — good luck to ’em; and they are all the better off for it. A soul’s a sort of a fifth wheel to a wagon.’



'What are you jabbering about, shipmate?' said I.

'*He's* got enough, though, to make up for all deficiencies of that sort in other chaps,' abruptly said the stranger, placing a nervous emphasis upon the word *he*.

'Queequeg,' said I, 'let's go; this fellow has broken loose from somewhere; he's talking about something and somebody we don't know.'

'Stop!' cried the stranger. 'Ye said true — ye hav'n't seen Old Thunder yet, have ye?'

'Who's Old Thunder?' said I, again riveted with the insane earnestness of his manner.

'Captain Ahab.'

'What! the captain of our ship, the *Pequod*?'

'Aye, among some of us old sailor chaps, he goes by that name. Ye hav'n't seen him yet, have ye?'

'No, we hav'n't. He's sick they say, but is getting better, and will be all right again before long.'

'All right again before long!' laughed the stranger, with a solemnly derisive sort of laugh. 'Look ye; when captain Ahab is all right, then this left arm of mine will be all right; not before.'

'What do you know about him?'

'What did they *tell* you about him? Say that!'

'They didn't tell much of anything about him; only I've heard that he's a good whale-hunter, and a good captain to his crew.'

'That's true, that's true — yes, both true enough. But you must jump when he gives an order. Step and growl; growl and go — that's the word with Captain Ahab. But nothing about that thing that happened to him off Cape Horn, long ago, when he lay like dead for three days and nights; nothing about that deadly scrimmage with the



Spaniard afore the altar in Santa? — heard nothing about that, eh? Nothing about the silver calabash he spat into? And nothing about his losing his leg last voyage, according to the prophecy. Didn't ye hear a word about them matters and something more, eh? No, I don't think ye did; how could ye? Who knows it? Not all Nantucket, I guess. But hows'ever, mayhap, ye've heard tell about the leg, and how he lost it: aye, ye have heard of that, I dare say. Oh yes, *that* every one knows a'most — I mean they know he's only one leg: and that a parmacetti took the other off.'

'My friend,' said I, 'what all this gibberish of yours is about, I don't know, and I don't much care: for it seems to me that you must be a little damaged in the head. But if you are speaking of Captain Ahab, of that ship there, the *Pequod*, then let me tell you, that I know all about the loss of his leg.'

'All about it, eh — sure you do? — all?'

'Pretty sure.'

With finger pointed and eye levelled at the *Pequod*, the beggar-like stranger stood a moment, as if in a troubled reverie; then starting a little, turned and said: — 'Ye've shipped, have ye? Names down on the papers? Well, well, what's signed, is signed; and what's to be, will be; and then again, perhaps it won't be, after all. Any how, it's all fixed and arranged a'ready; and some sailors or other must go with him, I suppose; as well these as any other men, God pity 'em! Morning to ye, shipmates, morning; the ineffable heavens bless ye; I'm sorry I stopped ye.'

'Look here, friend,' said I, 'if you have anything important to tell us, out with it; but if you are only trying to



bamboozle us, you are mistaken in your game; that's all I have to say.'

'And it's said very well, and I like to hear a chap talk up that way; you are just the man for him — the likes of ye. Morning to ye, shipmates, morning! Oh! when ye get there, tell 'em I've concluded not to make one of 'em.'

'Ah, my dear fellow, you can't fool us that way — you can't fool us. It is the easiest thing in the world for a man to look as if he had a great secret in him.'

'Morning to ye, shipmates, morning.'

'Morning it is,' said I. 'Come along, Queequeg, let's leave this crazy man. But stop, tell me your name, will you?'

'Elijah.'

Elijah! thought I, and we walked away, both commenting, after each other's fashion, upon this ragged old sailor; and agreed that he was nothing but a humbug, trying to be a bugbear. But we had not gone perhaps above a hundred yards, when chancing to turn a corner, and looking back as I did so, who should be seen but Elijah following us, though at a distance. Somehow, the sight of him struck me so, that I said nothing to Queequeg of his being behind, but passed on with my comrade, anxious to see whether the stranger would turn the same corner that we did. He did; and then it seemed to me that he was dogging us, but with what intent I could not for the life of me imagine. This circumstance, coupled with his ambiguous, half-hinting, half-revealing, shrouded sort of talk, now begat in me all kinds of vague wonderments and half-apprehensions, and all connected with the *Pequod*; and Captain Ahab; and the leg he had lost; and the Cape Horn fit; and the silver calabash; and what Captain



Peleg had said of him, when I left the ship the day previous; and the prediction of the squaw Tistig; and the voyage we had bound ourselves to sail; and a hundred other shadowy things.

I was resolved to satisfy myself whether this ragged Elijah was really dogging us or not, and with that intent crossed the way with Queequeg, and on that side of it retraced our steps. But Elijah passed on, without seeming to notice us. This relieved me; and once more, and finally as it seemed to me, I pronounced him in my heart, a humbug.



## CHAPTER XIX

### ALL ASTIR

A DAY or two passed, and there was great activity aboard the *Pequod*. Not only were the old sails being mended, but new sails were coming on board, and bolts of canvas, and coils of rigging; in short, everything betokened that the ship's preparations were hurrying to a close. Captain Peleg seldom or never went ashore, but sat in his wigwam keeping a sharp look-out upon the hands; Bildad did all the purchasing and providing at the stores; and the men employed in the hold and on the rigging were working till long after night-fall.

On the day following Queequeg's signing articles, word was given at all the inns where the ship's company were stopping, that their chests must be on board before night, for there was no telling how soon the vessel might be sailing. So Queequeg and I got down our traps, resolving, however, to sleep ashore till the last. But it seems they always give very long notice in these cases, and the ship did not sail for several days. But no wonder; there was a good deal to be done, and there is no telling how many things to be thought of, before the *Pequod* was fully equipped.

Every one knows what a multitude of things — beds, saucepans, knives and forks, shovels and tongs, napkins, nut-crackers, and what not, are indispensable to the business of housekeeping. Just so with whaling, which necessitates a three-years' housekeeping upon the wide ocean,



far from all grocers, costermongers, doctors, bakers, and bankers. And though this also holds true of merchant vessels, yet not by any means to the same extent as with whalemén. For besides the great length of the whaling voyage, the numerous articles peculiar to the prosecution of the fishery, and the impossibility of replacing them at the remote harbors usually frequented, it must be remembered, that of all ships, whaling vessels are the most exposed to accidents of all kinds, and especially to the destruction and loss of the very things upon which the success of the voyage most depends. Hence, the spare boats, spare spars, and spare lines and harpoons, and spare everythings, almost, but a spare Captain and duplicate ship.

At the period of our arrival at the Island, the heaviest storage of the *Pequod* had been almost completed; comprising her beef, bread, water, fuel, and iron hoops and staves. But, as before hinted, for some time there was a continual fetching and carrying on board of divers odds and ends of things, both large and small.

Chief among those who did this fetching and carrying was Captain Bildad's sister, a lean old lady of a most determined and indefatigable spirit, but withal very kind-hearted, who seemed resolved that, if *she* could help it, nothing should be found wanting in the *Pequod*, after once fairly getting to sea. At one time she would come on board with a jar of pickles for the steward's pantry; another time with a bunch of quills for the chief mate's desk, where he kept his log; a third time with a roll of flannel for the small of some one's rheumatic back. Never did any woman better deserve her name, which was Charity — Aunt Charity, as everybody called her. And like a sister



of charity did this charitable Aunt Charity bustle about hither and thither, ready to turn her hand and heart to anything that promised to yield safety, comfort, and consolation to all on board a ship in which her beloved brother Bildad was concerned, and in which she herself owned a score or two of well-saved dollars.

But it was startling to see this excellent hearted Quakeress coming on board, as she did the last day, with a long oil-ladle in one hand, and a still longer whaling lance in the other. Nor was Bildad himself nor Captain Peleg at all backward. As for Bildad, he carried about with him a long list of the articles needed, and at every fresh arrival, down went his mark opposite that article upon the paper. Every once and a while Peleg came hobbling out of his whale-bone den, roaring at the men down the hatchways, roaring up to the riggers at the masthead, and then concluded by roaring back into his wigwam.

During these days of preparation, Queequeg and I often visited the craft, and as often I asked about Captain Ahab, and how he was, and when he was going to come on board his ship. To these questions they would answer, that he was getting better and better, and was expected aboard every day; meantime, the two Captains, Peleg and Bildad, could attend to everything necessary to fit the vessel for the voyage. If I had been downright honest with myself, I would have seen very plainly in my heart that I did but half fancy being committed this way to so long a voyage, without once laying my eyes on the man who was to be the absolute dictator of it, so soon as the ship sailed out upon the open sea. But when a man suspects any wrong, it sometimes happens that if he be already involved in the matter, he insensibly strives to cover up his suspicions



even from himself. And much this way it was with me. I said nothing, and tried to think nothing.

At last it was given out that some time next day the ship would certainly sail. So next morning, Queequeg and I took a very early start.



## CHAPTER XX

### GOING ABOARD

It was nearly six o'clock, but only grey imperfect misty dawn, when we drew nigh the wharf.

'There are some sailors running ahead there, if I see right,' said I to Queequeg, 'it can't be shadow; she's off by sunrise, I guess; come on!'

'Avast!' cried a voice, whose owner at the same time coming close behind us, laid a hand upon both our shoulders, and then insinuating himself between us, stood stooping forward a little, in the uncertain twilight, strangely peering from Queequeg to me. It was Elijah.

'Going aboard?'

'Hands off, will you,' said I.

'Looke here,' said Queequeg, shaking himself, 'go 'way!'

'Ain't going aboard, then?'

'Yes, we are,' said I, 'but what business is that of yours? Do you know, Mr. Elijah, that I consider you a little impertinent?'

'No, no, no; I wasn't aware of that,' said Elijah, slowly and wonderingly looking from me to Queequeg, with the most unaccountable glances.

'Elijah,' said I, 'you will oblige my friend and me by withdrawing. We are going to the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and would prefer not to be detained.'

'Ye be, be ye? Coming back afore breakfast?'

'He's cracked, Queequeg,' said I, 'come on.'



'Holloa!' cried stationary Elijah, hailing us when we had removed a few paces.

'Never mind him,' said I, 'Queequeg, come on.'

But he stole up to us again, and suddenly clapping his hand on my shoulder, said -- 'Did ye see anything looking like men going towards that ship a while ago?'

Struck by this plain matter-of-fact question, I answered, saying, 'Yes, I thought I did see four or five men; but it was too dim to be sure.'

'Very dim, very dim,' said Elijah. 'Morning to ye.'

Once more we quitted him; but once more he came softly after us; and touching my shoulder again, said, 'See if you can find 'em now, will ye?'

'Find who?'

'Morning to ye! morning to ye!' he rejoined, again moving off. 'Oh! I was going to warn ye against -- but never mind, never mind -- it's all one, all in the family too; -- sharp frost this morning, ain't it? Good-bye to ye. Shan't see ye again very soon, I guess; unless it's before the Grand Jury.' And with these cracked words he finally departed, leaving me, for the moment, in no small wonderment at his frantic impudence.

At last, stepping on board the *Pequod*, we found everything in profound quiet, not a soul moving. The cabin entrance was locked within; the hatches were all on, and lumbered with coils of rigging. Going forward to the fore-castle, we found the slide of the scuttle open. Seeing a light, we went down, and found only an old rigger there, wrapped in a tattered pea-jacket. He was thrown at whole length upon two chests, his face downwards and inclosed in his folded arms. The profoundest slumber slept upon him.



‘Those sailors we saw, Queequeg, where can they have gone to?’ said I, looking dubiously at the sleeper. But it seemed that, when on the wharf, Queequeg had not at all noticed what I now alluded to; hence I would have thought myself to have been optically deceived in that matter, were it not for Elijah’s otherwise inexplicable question. But I beat the thing down; and again marking the sleeper, jocularly hinted to Queequeg that perhaps we had best sit up with the body; telling him to establish himself accordingly. He put his hand upon the sleeper’s rear, as though feeling if it was soft enough; and then, without more ado, sat quietly down there.

‘Gracious! Queequeg, don’t sit there,’ said I.

‘Oh! perry dood seat,’ said Queequeg, ‘my country way; won’t hurt him face.’

‘Face!’ said I, ‘call that his face? very benevolent countenance then; but how hard he breathes, he’s heaving himself; get off, Queequeg, you are heavy, its grinding the face of the poor. Get off, Queequeg! Look, he’ll twitch you off soon. I wonder he don’t wake.’

Queequeg removed himself to just beyond the head of the sleeper, and lighted his tomahawk pipe. I sat at the feet. We kept the pipe passing over the sleeper, from one to the other. Meanwhile, upon questioning him in his broken fashion, Queequeg gave me to understand that, in his land, owing to the absence of settees and sofas of all sorts, the king, chiefs, and great people generally, were in the custom of fattening some of the lower orders for ottomans; and to furnish a house comfortably in that respect, you had only to buy up eight or ten lazy fellows, and lay them round in the piers and alcoves. Besides, it was



very convenient on an excursion ; much better than those garden-chairs which are convertible into walking-sticks ; upon occasion, a chief calling his attendant, and desiring him to make a settee of himself under a spreading tree, perhaps in some damp marshy place.

While narrating these things, every time Queequeg received the tomahawk from me, he flourished the hatchet-side of it over the sleeper's head.

'What's that for, Queequeg?'

'Perry easy, kill-e ; oh ! perry easy !'

He was going on with some wild reminiscences about his tomahawk-pipe, which, it seemed, had in its two uses both brained his foes and soothed his soul, when we were directly attracted to the sleeping rigger. The strong vapor now completely filling the contracted hole, it began to tell upon him. He breathed with a sort of muffledness ; then seemed troubled in the nose ; then revolved over once or twice ; then sat up and rubbed his eyes.

'Holloa !' he breathed at last, 'who be ye smokers?'

'Shipped men,' answered I, 'when does she sail?'

'Aye, aye, ye are going in her, be ye ? She sails to-day. The Captain came aboard last night.'

'What Captain ? — Ahab?'

'Who but him indeed?'

I was going to ask him some further questions concerning Ahab, when we heard a noise on deck.

'Holloa ! Starbuck's astir,' said the rigger. 'He's a lively chief mate, that ; good man, and a pious ; but all alive now, I must turn to.' And so saying he went on deck, and we followed.

It was now clear sunrise. Soon the crew came on board in twos and threes ; the riggers bestirred themselves ; the



mates were actively engaged ; and several of the shore people were busy in bringing various last things on board. Meanwhile Captain Ahab remained invisibly enshrined within his cabin.



## CHAPTER XXI

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

AT length, towards noon, upon the final dismissal of the ship's riggers, and after the *Pequod* had been hauled out from the wharf, and after the ever-thoughtful Charity had come off in a whale-boat, with her last gift — a night-cap for Stubb, the second mate, her brother-in-law, and a spare Bible for the steward — after all this, the two Captains, Peleg and Bildad, issued from the cabin, and turning to the chief mate, Peleg said :

‘Now, Mr. Starbuck, are you sure everything is right? Captain Ahab is all ready — just spoke to him -- nothing more to be got from shore, eh? Well, call all hands, then. Muster ’em aft here — blast ’em!’

‘No need of profane words, however great the hurry, Peleg,’ said Bildad, ‘but away with thee, friend Starbuck, and do our bidding.’

How now! Here upon the very point of starting for the voyage, Captain Peleg and Captain Bildad were going it with a high hand on the quarter-deck, just as if they were to be joint-commanders at sea, as well as to all appearances in port. And, as for Captain Ahab, no sign of him was yet to be seen; only, they said he was in the cabin. But then, the idea was, that his presence was by no means necessary in getting the ship under weigh, and steering her well out to sea. Indeed, as that was not at all his proper business, but the pilot’s; and as he was not yet completely recovered —



so they said — therefore, Captain Ahab stayed below. And all this seemed natural enough; especially as in the merchant service many captains never show themselves on deck for a considerable time after heaving up the anchor, but remain over the cabin table, having a farewell merry-making with their shore friends, before they quit the ship for good with the pilot.

But there was not much chance to think over the matter, for Captain Peleg was now all alive. He seemed to do most of the talking and commanding, and not Bildad.

‘Aft here, ye sons of bachelors,’ he cried, as the sailors lingered at the main-mast. ‘Mr. Starbuck, drive ’em aft.’

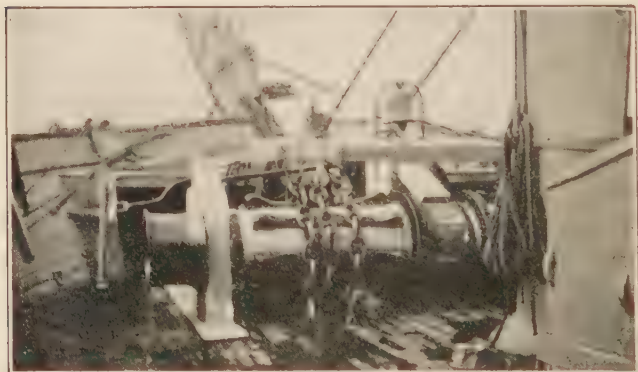
‘Strike the tent there!’ — was the next order. As I hinted before, this whalebone marquee was never pitched except in port; and on board the *Pequod*, for thirty years, the order to strike the tent was well known to be the next thing to heaving up the anchor.

‘Man the capstan! Blood and thunder! — jump!’ — was the next command, and the crew sprang for the hand-spikes.

Now, in getting under weigh, the station generally occupied by the pilot is the forward part of the ship. And here Bildad, who, with Peleg, be it known, in addition to his other offices, was one of the licensed pilots of the port — he being suspected to have got himself made a pilot in order to save the Nantucket pilot-fee to all the ships he was concerned in, for he never piloted any other craft — Bildad, I say, might now be seen actively engaged in looking over the bows for the approaching anchor, and at intervals singing what seemed a dismal stave of psalmody, to cheer the hands at the windlass, who roared forth some sort of a chorus about the girls in Booble Alley, with hearty good



will. Nevertheless, not three days previous, Bildad had told them that no profane songs would be allowed on board the *Pequod*, particularly in getting under weigh; and Charity, his sister, had placed a small choice copy of Watts in each seaman's berth.



THE WINDLASS ON THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

The ship's bell is directly above the windlass. The foremast is at the extreme right.

Meantime, overseeing the other part of the ship, Captain Peleg ripped and swore astern in the most frightful manner. I almost thought he would sink the ship before the anchor could be got up; involuntarily I paused on my handspike, and told Queequeg to do the same, thinking of the perils we both ran, in starting on the voyage with such a devil for a pilot. I was comforting myself, however, with the thought that in pious Bildad might be found some salvation, spite of his seven hundred and seventy-seventh lay; when I felt a sudden sharp poke in my rear, and turning round, was horrified at the apparition of Captain Peleg



in the act of withdrawing his leg from my immediate vicinity. That was my first kick.

‘Is that the way they heave in the marchant service?’ he roared. ‘Spring, thou sheep-head; spring, and break thy backbone! Why don’t ye spring, I say, all of ye — spring! Quohag! spring, thou chap with the red whiskers; spring there, Scotch-cap; spring, thou green pants. Spring, I say, all of ye, and spring your eyes out!’ And so saying, he moved along the windlass, here and there using his leg very freely, while imperturbable Bildad kept leading off with his psalmody. Thinks I, Captain Peleg must have been drinking something to-day.

At last the anchor was up, the sails were set, and off we glided. It was a short, cold Christmas; and as the short northern day merged into night, we found ourselves almost broad upon the wintry ocean, whose freezing spray cased us in ice, as in polished armor. The long rows of teeth on the bulwarks glistened in the moonlight; and like the white ivory tusks of some huge elephant, vast curving icicles depended from the bows

Lank Bildad, as pilot, headed the first watch, and ever and anon, as the old craft deep dived into the green seas, and sent the shivering frost all over her, and the winds howled, and the cordage rang, his steady notes were heard, —

‘Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,  
Stand dressed in living green.  
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,  
While Jordan rolled between.’

Never did those sweet words sound more sweetly to me than then. They were full of hope and fruition. Spite of this frigid winter night in the boisterous Atlantic, spite



of my wet feet and wetter jacket, there was yet, it then seemed to me, many a pleasant haven in store.

At last we gained such an offing, that the two pilots were needed no longer. The stout sail-boat that had accompanied us began ranging alongside.

It was curious and not unpleasing, how Peleg and Bildad were affected at this juncture, especially Captain Bildad. For loath to depart, yet; very loath to leave, for good, a ship bound on so long and perilous a voyage — beyond both stormy Capes; a ship in which some thousands of his hard earned dollars were invested; a ship, in which an old shipmate sailed as captain; a man almost as old as he, once more starting to encounter all the terrors of the pitiless jaw; loath to say good-bye to a thing so every way brimful of every interest to him, — poor old Bildad lingered long.

As for Peleg himself, he took it more like a philosopher; but for all his philosophy, there was a tear twinkling in his eye, when the lantern came too near. And he, too, did not a little run from cabin to deck — now a word below, and now a word with Starbuck, the chief mate.

But, at last, he turned to his comrade, with a final sort of look about him, — ‘Captain Bildad — come, old shipmate, we must go. Back the mainyard there! Boat ahoy! Stand by to come close alongside, now! Careful, careful! — come, Bildad, boy — say your last. Luck to ye, Starbuck — luck to ye, Mr. Stubb — luck to ye, Mr. Flask — good-bye, and good luck to ye all — and this day three years I’ll have a hot supper smoking for ye in old Nantucket. Hurrah and away!’

‘God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men,’ murmured old Bildad, almost incoherently. ‘I hope ye’ll have fine weather now, so that Captain Ahab may soon be



moving among ye — a pleasant sun is all he needs, and ye'll have plenty of them in the tropic voyage ye go. Be careful in the hunt, ye mates. Don't stave the boats needlessly, ye harpooneers; good white cedar plank is raised full three per cent. within the year. Don't forget your prayers, either. Mr. Starbuck, mind that cooper don't waste the spare staves. Oh! the sail-needles are in the green locker! Don't whale it too much a' Lord's days, men; but don't miss a fair chance either, that's rejecting Heaven's good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses tierce, Mr. Stubb; it was a little leaky, I thought. Good-bye, good-bye! Don't keep that cheese too long down in the hold, Mr. Starbuck; it'll spoil. Be careful with the butter — twenty cents the pound it was, and mind ye, if —'

'Come, come, Captain Bildad; stop palavering, — away!' and with that, Peleg hurried him over the side, and both dropt into the boat.

Ship and boat diverged; the cold, damp night breeze blew between; a screaming gull flew overhead; the two hulls wildly rolled; we gave three heavy-hearted cheers, and blindly plunged like fate into the lone Atlantic.



## CHAPTER XXII

### KNIGHTS AND SQUIRES

THE chief mate of the *Pequod* was Starbuck, a native of Nantucket, and a Quaker by descent. He was a long, earnest man, and though born on an icy coast, seemed well adapted to endure hot latitudes, his flesh being hard as twice-baked biscuit. Transported to the Indies, his live blood would not spoil like bottled ale. He must have been born in some time of general drought and famine, or upon one of those fast days for which his state is famous. Only some thirty arid summers had he seen; those summers had dried up all his physical superfluities. But this, his thinness, so to speak, seemed no more the token of wasting anxieties and cares, than it seemed the indication of any bodily blight. It was merely the condensation of the man. He was by no means ill-looking; quite the contrary. His pure tight skin was an excellent fit; and closely wrapped up in it, and embalmed with inner health and strength, like a revived Egyptian, this Starbuck seemed prepared to endure for long ages to come, and to endure always, as now; for be it Polar snow or torrid sun, like a patent chronometer, his interior vitality was warranted to do well in all climates. Looking into his eyes, you seemed to see there the yet lingering images of those thousand-fold perils he had calmly confronted through life. A staid, steadfast man, whose life for the most part was a telling pantomime of action, and not a tame chapter of sounds. Yet, for all



his hardy sobriety and fortitude, there were certain qualities in him which at times affected, and in some cases seemed well nigh to overbalance all the rest. Uncommonly conscientious for a seaman, and endued with a deep natural reverence, the wild watery loneliness of his life did therefore strongly incline him to superstition; but to that sort of superstition, which in some organizations seems rather to spring, somehow, from intelligence than from ignorance. Outward portents and inward presentiments were his. And if at times these things bent the welded iron of his soul, much more did his far-away domestic memories of his young Cape wife and child, tend to bend him still more from the original ruggedness of his nature, and open him still further to those latent influences which, in some honest-hearted men, restrain the gush of dare-devil daring, so often evinced by others in the more perilous vicissitudes of the fishery. 'I will have no man in my boat,' said Starbuck, 'who is not afraid of a whale.' By this, he seemed to mean, not only that the most reliable and useful courage was that which arises from the fair estimation of the encountered peril, but that an utterly fearless man is a far more dangerous comrade than a coward.

'Aye, aye,' said Stubb, the second mate, 'Starbuck, there, is as careful a man as you'll find anywhere in this fishery.' But we shall ere long see what that word 'careful' precisely means when used by a man like Stubb, or almost any other whale hunter.

Starbuck was no crusader after perils; in him courage was not a sentiment; but a thing simply useful to him, and always at hand upon all mortally practical occasions. Besides, he thought, perhaps, that in this business of whaling, courage was one of the great staple outfits of the ship,



like her beef and her bread, and not to be foolishly wasted. Wherefore he had no fancy for lowering for whales after sun-down; nor for persisting in fighting a fish that too much persisted in fighting him. For, thought Starbuck, I am here in this critical ocean to kill whales for my living, and not to be killed by them for theirs; and that hundreds of men had been so killed Starbuck well knew. What doom was his own father's? Where, in the bottomless deeps, could he find the torn limbs of his brother?

With memories like these in him, and, moreover, given to a certain superstitiousness, as has been said; the courage of this Starbuck, which could, nevertheless, still flourish, must indeed have been extreme. But it was not in reasonable nature that a man so organized, and with such terrible experiences and remembrances as he had; it was not in nature that these things should fail in latently engendering an element in him, which, under suitable circumstances, would break out from its confinement, and burn all his courage up. And brave as he might be, it was that sort of bravery chiefly, visible in some intrepid men, which, while generally abiding firm in the conflict with seas, or winds, or whales, or any of the ordinary irrational horrors of the world, yet cannot withstand those more terrific, because more spiritual terrors, which sometimes menace you from the concentrating brow of an enraged and mighty man.

Stubb was the second mate. He was a native of Cape Cod; and hence, according to local usage, was called a Cape-Cod-man. A happy-go-lucky; neither craven nor valiant; taking perils as they came with an indifferent air; and while engaged in the most imminent crisis of the chase, toiling away, calm and collected as a journeyman joiner engaged for the year. Good-humored, easy, and



careless, he presided over his whale-boat as if the most deadly encounter were but a dinner, and his crew all invited guests. He was as particular about the comfortable arrangements of his part of the boat, as an old stage-driver is about the snugness of his box. When close to the whale, in the very death-lock of the fight, he handled his unpitied lance coolly and off-handedly, as a whistling tinker his hammer. He would hum over his old rigadig tunes while flank and flank with the most exasperated monster. Long usage had, for this Stubb, converted the jaws of death into an easy chair. What he thought of death itself, there is no telling. Whether he ever thought of it at all, might be a question ; but, if he ever did chance to cast his mind that way after a comfortable dinner, no doubt, like a good sailor, he took it to be a sort of call of the watch to tumble aloft, and bestir themselves there, about something which he would find out when he obeyed the order, and not sooner.

What, perhaps, with other things, made Stubb such an easy-going, unfearing man, what helped to bring about that almost impious good-humor of his ; that thing must have been his pipe. For, like his nose, his short, black little pipe was one of the regular features of his face. You would almost as soon have expected him to turn out of his bunk without his nose as without his pipe. He kept a whole row of pipes there ready loaded, stuck in a rack, within easy reach of his hand ; and, whenever he turned in, he smoked them all out in succession, lighting one from the other to the end of the chapter ; then loading them again to be in readiness anew. For, when Stubb dressed, instead of first putting his legs into his trowsers, he put his pipe into his mouth.



The third mate was Flask, a native of Tisbury, in Martha's Vineyard. A short, stout, ruddy young fellow, very pugnacious concerning whales, who somehow seemed to think that the great Leviathans had personally and hereditarily affronted him; and therefore it was a sort of point of honor with him, to destroy them whenever encountered. So utterly lost was he to all sense of reverence for the many marvels of their majestic bulk and mystic ways; and so dead to anything like an apprehension of any possible danger from encountering them; that in his poor opinion, the wondrous whale was but a species of magnified mouse, or at least water rat, requiring only a little circumvention and some small application of time and trouble in order to kill and boil. This ignorant, unconscious fearlessness of his made him a little waggish in the matter of whales; he followed these fish for the fun of it; and a three years' voyage round Cape Horn was only a jolly joke that lasted that length of time. They called him King-Post on board of the *Pequod*; because, in form, he could be well likened to the short, square timber known by that name in Arctic whalers; and which by the means of many radiating side timbers inserted into it, serves to brace the ship against the icy concussions of those battering seas.

Now these three mates—Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask, were momentous men. They it was who by universal prescription commanded three of the *Pequod's* boats as headsmen. In that grand order of battle in which Captain Ahab would probably marshal his forces to descend on the whales, these three headsmen were as captains of companies. Or, being armed with their long keen whaling spears, they were as a picked trio of lancers; even as the harpooneers were flingers of javelins.



And since in this famous fishery, each mate or headsman, like a Gothic Knight of old, is always accompanied by his boat-steerer or harpooneer, who in certain conjunctures provides him with a fresh lance, when the former one has been badly twisted, or elbowed in the assault; and moreover, as there generally subsists between the two, a close intimacy and friendliness; it is therefore but meet, that in this place we set down who the *Pequod's* harpooneers were, and to what headsmen each of them belonged.

First of all was Queequeg, whom Starbuck, the chief mate, had selected for his squire. But Queequeg is already known.

Next was Tashtego, an unmixed Indian from Gay Head, the most westerly promontory of Martha's Vineyard, where there still exists the last remnant of a village of red men, which has long supplied the neighboring island of Nantucket with many of her most daring harpooneers. In the fishery, they usually go by the generic name of Gay-Headers. Tashtego's long, lean, sable hair, his high cheek bones, and black rounding eyes — for an Indian, Oriental in their largeness, but Antarctic in their glittering expression — all this sufficiently proclaimed him an inheritor of the unvitiated blood of those proud warrior hunters, who, in quest of the great New England moose, had scoured, bow in hand, the aboriginal forests of the main. But no longer snuffing in the trail of the wild beasts of the woodland, Tashtego now hunted in the wake of the great whales of the sea; the unerring harpoon of the son fitly replacing the infallible arrow of the sires. Tashtego was Stubb the second mate's squire.

Third among the harpooneers was Daggoo, a gigantic, coal-black negro-savage, with a lion-like tread — an



Ahasuerus to behold. Suspended from his ears were two golden hoops, so large that the sailors called them ring-bolts, and would talk of securing the top-sail halyards to them. In his youth Daggoo had voluntarily shipped on board of a whaler, lying in a lonely bay on his native coast. And never having been anywhere in the world but in Africa, Nantucket, and the pagan harbors most frequented by whalers; and having now led for many years the bold life of the fishery in the ships of owners uncommonly heedful of what manner of men they shipped; Daggoo retained all his barbaric virtues, and erect as a giraffe, moved about the decks in all the pomp of six feet five in his socks. There was a corporeal humility in looking up at him; and a white man standing before him seemed a white flag come to beg truce of a fortress. Curious to tell, this imperial negro, Ahasuerus Daggoo, was the Squire of little Flask, who looked like a chess-man beside him.

As for the residue of the *Pequod's* company, be it said, that at the present day not one in two of the many thousand men before the mast employed in the American whale fishery, are Americans born, though pretty nearly all the officers are. Herein it is the same with the American whale fishery as with the American army and military and merchant navies, and the engineering forces employed in the construction of the American Canals and Railroads. The same, I say, because in all these cases the native American liberally provides the brains, the rest of the world as generously supplying the muscles. No small number of these whaling seamen belong to the Azores, where the outward bound Nantucket whalers frequently touch to augment their crews from the hardy peasants. How it is, there is no telling, but Islanders seem to make the best whalers.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### AHAB

FOR several days after leaving Nantucket, nothing above hatches was seen of Captain Ahab. The mates regularly relieved each other at the watches, and for aught that could be seen to the contrary, they seemed to be the only commanders of the ship; only they sometimes issued from the cabin with orders so sudden and peremptory, that after all it was plain they but commanded vicariously. Yes, their supreme lord and dictator was there, though hitherto unseen by any eyes not permitted to penetrate into the now sacred retreat of the cabin.

Every time I ascended to the deck from my watches below, I instantly gazed aft to mark if any strange face were visible; for my first vague disquietude touching the unknown captain, now in the seclusion of the sea, became almost a perturbation. But whatever it was of apprehensiveness or uneasiness — to call it so — which I felt, yet whenever I came to look about me in the ship, it seemed against all warrantry to cherish such emotions. For though the harpooneers, with the great body of the crew, were a far more barbaric, heathenish, and motley set than any of the tame merchant-ship companies which my previous experiences had made me acquainted with, still I ascribed this — and rightly ascribed it — to the fierce uniqueness of the very nature of that wild Scandinavian vocation in which I had so abandonedly embarked. But it



was especially the aspect of the three chief officers of the ship, the mates, which was most forcibly calculated to allay these colorless misgivings, and induce confidence and cheerfulness in every presentment of the voyage. Three better, more likely sea-officers and men, each in his own different way, could not readily be found, and they were every one of them Americans; a Nantucketer, a Vineyarder, a Cape man. Now, it being Christmas when the ship shot from out her harbor, for a space we had biting Polar weather, though all the time running away from it to the southward; and by every degree and minute of latitude which we sailed, gradually leaving that merciless winter, and all its intolerable weather behind us. It was one of those less lowering, but still gray and gloomy enough mornings of the transition, when with a fair wind the ship was rushing through the water with a vindictive sort of leaping and melancholy rapidity, that as I mounted to the deck at the call of the forenoon watch, so soon as I levelled my glance towards the taffrail, foreboding shivers ran over me. Reality outran apprehension; Captain Ahab stood upon his quarter-deck.

There seemed no sign of common bodily illness about him, nor of the recovery from any. He looked like a man cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them, or taking away one particle from their compacted aged robustness. His whole high, broad form, seemed made of solid bronze, and shaped in an unalterable mould, like Cellini's cast Perseus. Threading its way out from among his grey hairs, and continuing right down one side of his tawny scorched face and neck, till it disappeared in his clothing, you saw a slender rod-like mark, lividly whitish. It





JOHN BARRYMORE AS CAPTAIN AHAB  
*From The Sea Beast, the screen version of Moby Dick.*



resembled that perpendicular seam sometimes made in the straight, lofty trunk of a great tree, when the upper lightning tearingly darts down it, and without wrenching a single twig, peels and grooves out the bark from top to bottom, ere running off into the soil, leaving the tree still greenly alive, but branded. Whether that mark was born with him, or whether it was the scar left by some desperate wound, no one could certainly say. By some tacit consent, throughout the voyage little or no allusion was made to it, especially by the mates. But once Tashtego's senior, an old Gay-Head Indian among the crew, superstitiously asserted that not till he was full forty years old did Ahab become that way branded, and then it came upon him, not in the fury of any mortal fray, but in an elemental strife at sea. Yet, this wild hint seemed inferentially negatived, by what a grey Manxman insinuated, an old sepulchral man, who, having never before sailed out of Nantucket, had never ere this laid eye upon wild Ahab. Nevertheless, the old sea-traditions, the immemorial credulities, popularly invested this old Manxman with preternatural powers of discernment. So that no white sailor seriously contradicted him when he said that if ever Captain Ahab should be tranquilly laid out — which might hardly come to pass, so he muttered — then, whoever should do that last office for the dead, would find a birth-mark on him from crown to sole.

So powerfully did the whole grim aspect of Ahab affect me, and the livid brand which streaked it, that for the first few moments I hardly noted that not a little of this overbearing grimness was owing to the barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood. It had previously come to me that this ivory leg had at sea been fashioned from the polished



bone of the sperm whale's jaw. 'Aye, he was dismasted off Japan,' said the old Gay-Head Indian once; 'but like his dismasted craft, he shipped another mast without coming home for it. He has a quiver of 'em.'



THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN ON THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

The drawers above the sofa contained the ship's supply of medicine. The quadrant was kept in one of the boxes above. The captain's stateroom is at the extreme left.

I was struck with the singular posture he maintained. Upon each side of the *Pequod's* quarter-deck, and pretty close to the mizzen shrouds, there was an auger hole, bored about half an inch or so, into the plank. His bone leg steadied in that hole; one arm elevated, and holding by a shroud; Captain Ahab stood erect, looking straight out beyond the ship's ever-pitching prow. There was an



infinity of firmest fortitude, a determinate, unsunderable wilfulness, in the fixed and fearless, forward dedication of that glance. Not a word he spoke; nor did his officers say aught to him; though by all their minutest gestures and expressions, they plainly showed the uneasy, if not painful, consciousness of being under a troubled master-eye. And not only that, but moody stricken Ahab stood before them with a crucifixion in his face; in all the nameless regal overbearing dignity of some mighty woe.

Ere long, from his first visit in the air, he withdrew into his cabin. But after that morning, he was every day visible to the crew; either standing in his pivot-hole, or seated upon an ivory stool he had; or heavily walking the deck. As the sky grew less gloomy; indeed, began to grow a little genial, he became still less and less a recluse; as if, when the ship had sailed from home, nothing but the dead wintry bleakness of the sea had then kept him so secluded. And, by and by, it came to pass, that he was almost continually in the air; but, as yet, for all that he said, or perceptibly did, on the at last sunny deck, he seemed as unnecessary there as another mast. But the *Pequod* was only making a passage now; not regularly cruising; nearly all whaling preparatives needing supervision the mates were fully competent to, so that there was little or nothing, out of himself, to employ or excite Ahab, now.



## CHAPTER XXIV

ENTER AHAB; TO HIM, STUBB

SOME days elapsed, and ice and icebergs all astern, the *Pequod* now went rolling through the bright Quito spring, which, at sea, almost perpetually reigns on the threshold of the eternal August of the Tropic. The warmly cool, clear, ringing, perfumed, overflowing, redundant days, were as crystal goblets of Persian sherbet, heaped up — flaked up, with rose-water snow. The starred and stately nights seemed haughty dames in jewelled velvets, nursing at home in lonely pride, the memory of their absént conquering Earls, the golden helmeted suns!

Old age is always wakeful; as if, the longer linked with life, the less man has to do with aught that looks like death. Among sea-commanders, the old greybeards will oftenest leave their berths to visit the night-cloaked deck. It was so with Ahab; only that now, of late, he seemed so much to live in the open air, that truly speaking, his visits were more to the cabin, than from the cabin to the planks. 'It feels like going down into one's tomb,' — he would mutter to himself, — 'for an old captain like me to be descending this narrow scuttle, to go to my grave-dug berth.'

So, almost every twenty-four hours, when the watches of the night were set, and the band on deck sentinelled the slumbers of the band below, the silent steersman would watch the cabin-scuttle; and ere long the old man would emerge, gripping at the iron banister, to help his crippled



way. Some considering touch of humanity was in him: for at times like these, he usually abstained from patrolling the quarter-deck: because to his wearied mates, seeking repose within six inches of his ivory heel, such would have been the reverberating crack and din of that bony step, that their dreams would have been of the crunching teeth of sharks. But once, the mood was on him too deep for common regardings; and as with heavy, lumber-like pace he was measuring the ship from taffrail to mainmast, Stubb, the old second mate, came up from below, with a certain unassured, deprecating humorousness, hinted that if Captain Ahab was pleased to walk the planks, then, no one could say nay; but there might be some way of muffling the noise; hinting something indistinctly and hesitatingly about a globe of tow, and the insertion into it, of the ivory heel. Ah! Stubb, thou did'st not know Ahab then.

'Am I a cannon-ball, Stubb,' said Ahab, 'that thou wouldst wad me that fashion? But go thy ways; I had forgot. Below to thy nightly grave; where such as ye sleep between shrouds, to use ye to the filling one at last. — Down, dog, and kennel!'

Starting at the unforeseen concluding exclamation of the so suddenly scornful old man, Stubb was speechless a moment; then said excitedly, 'I am not used to be spoken to that way, sir; I do but less than half like it, sir.'

'Avast!' gritted Ahab between his set teeth, and violently moving away, as if to avoid some passionate temptation.

'No, sir; not yet,' said Stubb, emboldened, 'I will not tamely be called a dog, sir.'

'Then be called ten times a donkey, and a mule, and an ass, and begone, or I'll clear the world of thee!'



As he said this, Ahab advanced upon him with such overbearing terrors in his aspect, that Stubb involuntarily retreated.

‘I was never served so before without giving a hard blow for it,’ muttered Stubb, as he found himself descending the cabin-scuttle. ‘It’s very queer. Stop, Stubb; somehow, now, I don’t well know whether to go back and strike him, or — what’s that? — down here on my knees and pray for him? Yes, that was the thought coming up in me; but it would be the first time I ever *did* pray. It’s queer; very queer; and he’s queer too; aye, take him fore and aft, he’s about the queerest old man Stubb ever sailed with. How he flashed at me! — his eyes like powder-pans! is he mad? Anyway there’s something on his mind, as sure as there must be something on a deck when it cracks. He ain’t in his bed now, either, more than three hours out of the twenty-four; and he don’t sleep then. Didn’t that Dough-Boy, the steward, tell me that of a morning he always finds the old man’s hammock clothes all rumpled and tumbled, and the sheets down at the foot, and the coverlid almost tied into knots, and the pillow a sort of frightful hot, as though a baked brick had been on it? He’s full of riddles; I wonder what he goes into the after hold for, every night, as Dough-Boy tells me he suspects; what’s that for, I should like to know? Who’s made appointments with him in the hold? Ain’t that queer, now? Here goes for a snooze.

‘In the morning, I’ll see how this plaguy juggling thinks over by daylight.’



## CHAPTER XXV

### THE SPECKSYNDER

CONCERNING the officers of the whale-craft, this seems as good a place as any to set down a little domestic peculiarity on ship-board, arising from the existence of the harpooneer class of officers, a class unknown of course in any other marine than the whale-fleet.

The large importance attached to the harpooneer's vocation is evinced by the fact, that originally in the old Dutch Fishery, two centuries and more ago, the command of a whale ship was not wholly lodged in the person now called the captain, but was divided between him and an officer called the Specksynder. Literally this word means *Fat-Cutter*; usage, however, in time made it equivalent to *Chief Harpooneer*. In those days, the captain's authority was restricted to the navigation and general management of the vessel: while over the whale-hunting department and all its concerns, the Specksynder or *Chief Harpooneer* reigned supreme. In the British Greenland Fishery, under the corrupted title of *Specksioneer*, this old Dutch official is still retained, but his former dignity is sadly abridged. At present he ranks simply as senior Harpooneer; and as such, is but one of the captain's more inferior subalterns. Nevertheless, as upon the good conduct of the harpooneers the success of a whaling voyage largely depends, and since in the American Fishery he is not only an important officer in the boat, but under certain



circumstances (night watches on a whaling ground) the command of the ship's deck is also his; therefore the grand political maxim of the sea demands, that he should nominally live apart from the men before the mast, and be in some way distinguished as their professional superior; though always, by them, regarded as their social equal.

Now, the grand distinction drawn between officer and man at sea, is this — the first lives aft, the last forward. Hence, in whale-ships and merchantmen alike, the mates have their quarters with the captain; and so, too, in most of the American whalers the harpooneers are lodged in the after part of the ship. That is to say, they take their meals in the captain's cabin, and sleep in a place indirectly communicating with it.

Though the long period of a Southern whaling voyage (by far the longest of all voyages now or ever made by man), the peculiar perils of it, and the community of interest prevailing among a company, all of whom, high or low, depend for their profits, not upon fixed wages, but upon their common luck, together with their common vigilance, intrepidity, and hard work; though all these things do in some cases tend to beget a less rigorous discipline than in merchantmen generally; yet, never mind how much like an old Mesopotamian family these whalemén may, in some primitive instances, live together; for all that, the punctilious externals, at least, of the quarter-deck are seldom materially relaxed, and in no instance done away. Indeed, many are the Nantucket ships in which you will see the skipper parading his quarter-deck with an elated grandeur not surpassed in any military navy; nay, extorting almost as much outward homage as if he wore the imperial purple, and not the shabbiest of pilot-cloth.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE CABIN-TABLE

OVER his ivory-inlaid table, Ahab presided like a mute, maned sea-lion on the white coral beach, surrounded by



THE MESSROOM IN THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

The captain and officers ate at this table. The door in the background opens into the cook's pantry.

his warlike but still deferential cubs. In his own proper turn, each officer waited to be served. They were as little children before Ahab; and yet, in Ahab, there seemed not to lurk the smallest social arrogance. With one mind, their intent eyes all fastened upon the old man's knife, as he carved the chief dish before him. I do not suppose that for the world they would have profaned that moment



with the slightest observation, even upon so neutral a topic as the weather. No! And when reaching out his knife and fork, between which the slice of beef was locked, Ahab thereby motioned Starbuck's plate towards him, the mate received his meat as though receiving alms; and cut it tenderly; and a little started if, perchance, the knife grazed against the plate; and chewed it noiselessly; and swallowed it, not without circumspection. What a relief it was to choking Stubb, when a rat made a sudden racket in the hold below. And poor little Flask, he was the youngest son, and little boy of this weary family party. His were the shin-bones of the saline beef; his would have been the drumsticks. For Flask to have presumed to help himself, this must have seemed to him tantamount to larceny in the first degree. Had he helped himself at the table, doubtless, never more would he have been able to hold his head up in this honest world; nevertheless, strange to say, Ahab never forbade him. And had Flask helped himself, the chances were Ahab had never so much as noticed it. Least of all, did Flask presume to help himself to butter. Whether he thought the owners of the ship denied it to him, on account of its clotting his clear, sunny complexion; or whether he deemed that, on so long a voyage in such marketless waters, butter was at a premium, and therefore was not for him, a subaltern; however it was, Flask, alas! was a butterless man!

Another thing. Flask was the last person down at the dinner, and Flask is the first man up. Consider! For hereby Flask's dinner was badly jammed in point of time. Starbuck and Stubb both had the start of him; and yet they also have the privilege of lounging in the rear. If Stubb even, who is but a peg higher than Flask, happens to



have but a small appetite, and soon shows symptoms of concluding his repast, then Flask must bestir himself, he will not get more than three mouthfuls that day; for it is against holy usage for Stubb to precede Flask to the deck. Therefore it was that Flask once admitted in private, that ever since he had arisen to the dignity of an officer, from that moment he had never known what it was to be otherwise than hungry, more or less. For what he ate did not so much relieve his hunger, as keep it immortal in him. Peace and satisfaction, thought Flask, have for ever departed from my stomach. I am an officer; but, how I wish I could fist a bit of old-fashioned beef in the fore-castle, as I used to when I was before the mast. There's the fruits of promotion now; there's the vanity of glory; there's the insanity of life! Besides, if it were so that any mere sailor of the *Pequod* had a grudge against Flask in Flask's official capacity, all that sailor had to do, in order to obtain ample vengeance, was to go aft at dinner-time, and get a peep at Flask through the cabin sky-light, sitting silly and dumfounded before awful Ahab.

Now, Ahab and his three mates formed what may be called the first table in the *Pequod's* cabin. After their departure, taking place in inverted order to their arrival, the canvas cloth was cleared, or rather was restored to some hurried order by the pallid steward. And then the three harpooners were bidden to the feast, they being its residuary legatees. They made a sort of temporary servants' hall of the high and mighty cabin.

In strange contrast to the hardly tolerable constraint and nameless invisible domineerings of the captain's table, was the entire care-free license and ease, the almost frantic democracy of those inferior fellows the harpooners.



While their masters, the mates, seemed afraid of the sound of the hinges of their own jaws, the harpooners chewed their food with such a relish that there was a report to it. They dined like lords; they filled their bellies like Indian ships all day loading with spices. Such portentous appetites had Queequeg and Tashtego, that to fill out the vacancies made by the previous repast, often the pale Dough-Boy was fain to bring on a great baron of salt-junk, seemingly quarried out of the solid ox. And if he were not lively about it, if he did not go with a nimble hop-skip-and-jump, then Tashtego had an ungentlemanly way of accelerating him by darting a fork at his back, harpoon wise. And once Daggoo, seized with a sudden humor, assisted Dough-Boy's memory by snatching him up bodily, and thrusting his head into a great empty wooden trencher, while Tashtego, knife in hand, began laying out the circle preliminary to scalping him. He was naturally a very nervous, shuddering sort of little fellow, this bread-faced steward; the progeny of a bankrupt baker and a hospital nurse. And what with the standing spectacle of the black terrific Ahab, and the periodical tumultuous visitations of these three savages, Dough-Boy's whole life was one continual lip-quiver. Commonly, after seeing the harpooners furnished with all things they demanded, he would escape from their clutches into his little pantry adjoining, and fearfully peep out at them through the blinds of its door, till all was over.

It was a sight to see Queequeg seated over against Tashtego, opposing his filed teeth to the Indian's; cross-wise to them, Daggoo seated on the floor, for a bench would have brought his hearse plumed head to the low carlines; at every motion of his colossal limbs, making the low



cabin framework to shake, as when an African elephant goes passenger in a ship. But for all this, the great negro was wonderfully abstemious, not to say dainty. It seemed hardly possible that by such comparatively small mouthfuls he could keep up the vitality diffused through so broad, baronial, and superb a person. But, doubtless, this noble savage fed strong and drank deep of the abounding element of air; and through his dilated nostrils snuffed in the sublime life of the worlds. Not by beef or by bread, are giants made or nourished. But Queequeg, he had a mortal, barbaric smack of the lip in eating — an ugly sound enough — so much so, that the trembling Dough-Boy almost looked to see whether any marks of teeth lurked in his own lean arms. And when he would hear Tashtego singing out for him to produce himself, that his bones might be picked, the simple-witted Steward all but shattered the crockery hanging round him in the pantry, by his sudden fits of the palsy. Nor did the whetstone which the harpooners carried in their pockets, for their lances and other weapons; and with which whetstones, at dinner, they would ostentatiously sharpen their knives; that grating sound did not at all tend to tranquillize poor Dough-Boy. How could he forget that in his Island days, Queequeg, for one, must certainly have been guilty of some murderous, convivial indiscretions. Alas! Dough-Boy! hard fares the white waiter who waits upon cannibals. Not a napkin should he carry on his arm, but a buckler. In good time, though, to his great delight, the three salt-sea warriors would rise and depart; to his credulous, fable-mongering ears, all their martial bones jingling in them at every step, like Moorish scimitars in scabbards.

But, though these barbarians dined in the cabin, and



nominally lived there ; still, being anything but sedentary in their habits, they were scarcely ever in it except at meal-times, and just before sleeping-time, when they passed through it to their own peculiar quarters.

In this one matter, Ahab seemed no exception to most American whale captains, who, as a set, rather incline to the opinion that by rights the ship's cabin belongs to them ; and that it is by courtesy alone that anybody else is, at any time, permitted there. So that, in real truth, the mates and harpooneers of the *Pequod* might more properly be said to have lived out of the cabin than in it. For when they did enter it, it was something as a street-door enters a house ; turning inwards for a moment, only to be turned out the next ; and, as a permanent thing, residing in the open air. Nor did they lose much hereby ; in the cabin was no companionship ; socially, Ahab was inaccessible. Though nominally included in the census of Christendom, he was still an alien to it. He lived in the world, as the last of the Grisly Bears lived in settled Missouri. And as when Spring and Summer had departed, that wild Logan of the woods, burying himself in the hollow of a tree, lived out the winter there, sucking his own paws ; so, in his inclement, howling old age, Ahab's soul, shut up in the caved trunk of his body, there fed upon the sullen paws of its gloom !



## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE QUARTER-DECK

*(Enter Ahab: Then, all.)*

ONE morning shortly after breakfast, Ahab, as was his wont, ascended the cabin-gangway to the deck. There most sea-captains usually walk at that hour, as country gentlemen, after the same meal, take a few turns in the garden.

Soon his steady, ivory stride was heard, as to and fro he paced his old rounds, upon planks so familiar to his tread, that they were all over dented, like geological stones, with the peculiar mark of his walk. Did you fixedly gaze, too, upon that ribbed and dented brow; there also, you would see still stranger foot-prints — the foot-prints of his one unsleeping, ever-pacing thought.

But on the occasion in question, those dents looked deeper, even as his nervous step that morning left a deeper mark. And, so full of his thought was Ahab, that at every uniform turn that he made, now at the main-mast and now at the binnacle, you could almost see that thought turn in him as he turned, and pace in him as he paced; so completely possessing him, indeed, that it all but seemed the inward mould of every outer movement.

‘D’ye mark him, Flask?’ whispered Stubb; ‘the chick that’s in him pecks the shell. ’Twill soon be out.’

The hours wore on; — Ahab now shut up within his



cabin; anon, pacing the deck, with the same intense bigotry of purpose in his aspect.

It drew near the close of day. Suddenly he came to a halt by the bulwarks, and inserting his bone leg into the auger-hole there, and with one hand grasping a shroud, he ordered Starbuck to send everybody aft.

‘Sir!’ said the mate, astonished at an order seldom or never given on ship-board except in some extraordinary case.

‘Send everybody aft,’ repeated Ahab. ‘Mastheads, there! come down!’

When the entire ship’s company were assembled, and with curious and not wholly unapprehensive faces, were eyeing him, for he looked not unlike the weather horizon when a storm is coming up, Ahab, after rapidly glancing over the bulwarks, and then darting his eyes among the crew, started from his standpoint; and as though not a soul were nigh him resumed his heavy turns upon the deck. With bent head and half-slouched hat he continued to pace, unmindful of the wondering whispering among the men; till Stubb cautiously whispered to Flask, that Ahab must have summoned them there for the purpose of witnessing a pedestrian feat. But this did not last long. Vehemently pausing, he cried: —

‘What do ye do when ye see a whale, men?’

‘Sing out for him!’ was the impulsive rejoinder from a score of clubbed voices.

‘Good!’ cried Ahab, with a wild approval in his tones; observing the hearty animation into which his unexpected question had so magnetically thrown them.

‘And what do ye next, men?’

‘Lower away, and after him!’



‘And what tune is it ye pull to, men?’

‘A dead whale or a stove boat!’

More and more strangely and fiercely glad and approving, grew the countenance of the old man at every shout; while the mariners began to gaze curiously at each other, as if marvelling how it was that they themselves became so excited at such seemingly purposeless questions.

But, they were all eagerness again, as Ahab, now half-revolving in his pivot-hole, with one hand reaching high up a shroud, and tightly, almost convulsively grasping it, addressed them thus: —

‘All ye mast-headers have before now heard me give orders about a white whale. Look ye! d’ye see this Spanish ounce of gold?’ — holding up a broad bright coin to the sun — ‘it is a sixteen dollar piece, men. D’ye see it? Mr. Starbuck, hand me yon top-maul.’

While the mate was getting the hammer, Ahab, without speaking, was slowly rubbing the gold piece against the skirts of his jacket, as if to heighten its lustre, and without using any words was meanwhile lowly humming to himself, producing a sound so strangely muffled and inarticulate that it seemed the mechanical humming of the wheels of his vitality in him

Receiving the top-maul from Starbuck, he advanced towards the main-mast with the hammer uplifted in one hand, exhibiting the gold with the other, and with a high raised voice exclaiming: ‘Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw; whosoever of ye raises me that white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke — look ye, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!’



‘Huzza ! huzza !’ cried the seamen, as with swinging tarpaulins they hailed the act of nailing the gold to the mast.

‘It’s a white whale, I say,’ resumed Ahab, as he threw down the top-maul : ‘a white whale. Skin your eyes for him, men ; look sharp for white water ; if ye see but a bubble, sing out.’

All this while Tashtego, Daggoo, and Queequeg had looked on with even more intense interest and surprise than the rest, and at the mention of the wrinkled brow and crooked jaw they had started as if each was separately touched by some specific recollection.

‘Captain Ahab,’ said Tashtego, ‘that white whale must be the same that some call Moby Dick.’

‘Moby Dick?’ shouted Ahab. ‘Do ye know the white whale then, Tash?’

‘Does he fan-tail a little curious, sir, before he goes down?’ said the Gay-Header deliberately.

‘And has he a curious spout, too,’ said Daggoo, ‘very bushy, even for a parmacetty, and mighty quick, Captain Ahab?’

‘And he have one, two, tree — oh ! good many iron in him hide, too, Captain,’ cried Queequeg disjointedly, ‘all twiske-tee be-twisk, like him — him —’ faltering hard for a word, and screwing his hand round and round as though uncorking a bottle — ‘like him — him —’

‘Corkscrew!’ cried Ahab, ‘aye, Queequeg, the harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him ; aye, Daggoo, his spout is a big one, like a whole shock of wheat, and white as a pile of our Nantucket wool after the great annual sheep-shearing ; aye, Tashtego, and he fan-tails like a split jib in a squall. Death and devils ! men, it is Moby Dick ye have seen — Moby Dick — Moby Dick !’



‘Captain Ahab,’ said Starbuck, who, with Stubb and Flask, had thus far been eyeing his superior with increasing surprise, but at last seemed struck with a thought which somewhat explained all the wonder. ‘Captain Ahab, I have heard of Moby Dick — but it was not Moby Dick that took off thy leg?’

‘Who told thee that?’ cried Ahab: then pausing, ‘Aye, Starbuck; aye, my hearties all round; it was Moby Dick that dismasted me; Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now. Aye, aye,’ he shouted with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; ‘aye, aye! it was that accursed white whale that razed me; made a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!’ Then tossing both arms, with measureless imprecations he shouted out: ‘Aye, aye! and I’ll chase him round Good Hope, and round the Horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round perdition’s flames before I give him up. And this is what ye have shipped for, men! to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out. What say ye, men, will ye splice hands on it, now? I think ye do look brave.’

‘Aye, aye!’ shouted the harpooneers and seamen, running closer to the excited old man: ‘A sharp eye for the white whale; a sharp lance for Moby Dick!’

‘God bless ye,’ he seemed to half sob and half shout. ‘God bless ye, men. Steward! go draw the great measure of grog. But what’s this long face about, Mr. Starbuck; wilt thou not chase the white whale? art not game for Moby Dick?’

‘I am game for his crooked jaw, and for the jaws of Death too, Captain Ahab, if it fairly comes in the way of



the business we follow; but I came here to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if thou gettest it, Captain Ahab? it will not fetch thee much in our Nantucket market.'

'Nantucket market! Hoot! But comer closer, Starbuck; thou requirest a little lower layer. If money's to be the measurer, man, and the accountants have computed their great counting-house the globe, by girdling it with guineas, one to every three parts of an inch; then, let me tell thee, that my vengeance will fetch a great premium *here!*'

'He smites his chest,' whispered Stubb, 'what's that for? methinks it rings most vast, but hollow.'

'Vengeance on a dumb brute!' cried Starbuck, 'that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous.'

'Hark ye yet again, — the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event — in the living act, the undoubted deed — there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I think there's naught beyond. But 'tis enough. He tasks me; he heaps me; I see in him outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing it. That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate; and be the white whale agent, or be the white whale principal, I will wreak that hate upon him. Talk not to me of blas-



phemy, man; I'd strike the sun if it insulted me. For could the sun do that, then could I do the other; since there is ever a sort of fair play herein, jealousy presiding over all creations. But not my master, man, is even that fair play. Who's over me? Truth hath no confines. Take off thine eye! more intolerable than fiends' glarings is a doltish stare! So, so; thou reddenest and palest; my heat has melted thee to anger-glow. But look ye, Starbuck, what is said in heat, that thing unsays itself. There are men from whom warm words are small indignity. I meant not to incense thee. Let it go. Look! see yonder Turkish cheeks of spotted tawn — living, breathing pictures painted by the sun. The Pagan leopards — the unrecking and unworshipping things, that live; and seek, and give no reasons for the torrid life they feel! The crew, man, the crew! Are they not one and all with Ahab, in this matter of the whale? See Stubb! he laughs! See yonder Chilian! he snorts to think of it. Stand up amid the general hurricane, thy one tost sapling cannot, Starbuck! And what is it? Reckon it. 'Tis but to help strike a fin; no wondrous feat for Starbuck. What is it more? From this one poor hunt, then, the best lance out of all Nantucket, surely he will not hang back, when every foremasthand has clutched a whetstone? Ah! constrainings seize thee; I see! the billow lifts thee! Speak, but speak! — Aye, aye! thy silence, then, *that* voices thee. (*Aside*) Something shot from my dilated nostrils, he has inhaled it in his lungs. Starbuck now is mine; cannot oppose me now, without rebellion.'

'God keep me! — keep us all!' murmured Starbuck, lowly.



But in his joy at the enchanted, tacit acquiescence of the mate, Ahab did not hear his foreboding invocation; nor yet the low laugh from the hold; nor yet the pre-saging vibrations of the winds in the cordage; nor yet the hollow flap of the sails against the masts, as for a moment their hearts sank in. For again Starbuck's downcast eyes lighted up with the stubbornness of life; the subterranean laugh died away; the winds blew on; the sails filled out; the ship heaved and rolled as before. Ah, ye admonitions and warnings! why stay ye not when ye come? But rather are ye predictions than warnings, ye shadows! Yet not so much predictions from without, as verifications of the foregoing things within. For with little external to constrain us, the innermost necessities in our being, these still drive us on.

'The measure! the measure!' cried Ahab.

Receiving the brimming pewter, and turning to the harpooneers, he ordered them to produce their weapons. Then ranging them before him near the capstan, with their harpoons in their hands, while his three mates stood at his side with their lances, and the rest of the ship's company formed a circle round the group; he stood for an instant searchingly eyeing every man of his crew. But those wild eyes met his, as the bloodshot eyes of the prairie wolves meet the eye of their leader, ere he rushes on at their head in the trail of the bison; but, alas! only to fall into the hidden snare of the Indian.

'Drink and pass!' he cried, handing the heavy charged flagon to the nearest seamen. 'The crew alone now drink. Round with it, round! Short draughts — long swallows, men; 'tis hot as Satan's hoof. So, so; it goes round excellently. It spiralizes in ye; forks out at the serpent-



snapping eye. Well done; almost drained. That way it went, this way it comes. Hand it me — here's a hollow! Men, ye seem the years; so brimming life is gulped and gone. Steward, refill!

'Attend now, my braves. I have mustered ye all round this capstan; and ye mates, flank me with your lances; and ye harpooneers, stand there with your irons; and ye, stout mariners, ring me in, that I may in some sort revive a noble custom of my fishermen fathers before me. O men, you will yet see that — Ha! boy, come back? bad pennies come not sooner. Hand it me. Why, now, this pewter had run brimming again, wer't not thou St. Vitus' imp — away, thou ague!

'Advance, ye mates! Cross your lances full before me. Well done! Let me touch the axis.' So saying, with extended arm, he grasped the three level, radiating lances at their crossed centre; while so doing, suddenly and nervously twitched them; meanwhile, glancing intently from Starbuck to Stubb; from Stubb to Flask. It seemed as though, by some nameless, interior volition, he would fain have shocked into them the same fiery emotion accumulated within the Leyden jar of his own magnetic life. The three mates quailed before his strong, sustained, and mystic aspect. Stubb and Flask looked sideways from him; the honest eye of Starbuck fell downright.

'In vain!' cried Ahab; 'but, maybe, 'tis well. For did ye three but once take the full-forced shock, then mine own electric thing, *that* had perhaps expired from out me. Perchance, too, it would have dropped ye dead. Perchance ye need it not. Down lances! And now, ye mates, I do appoint ye three cupbearers to my three pagan kinsmen there — yon three most honorable gentlemen and noble-



men, my valiant harpooneers. Disdain the task? What, when the great Pope washes the feet of beggars, using his tiara for ewer? Oh, my sweet cardinals! your own condescension, *that* shall bend ye to it. I do not order ye; ye will it. Cut your seizings and draw the poles, ye harpooneers!’

Silently obeying the order, the three harpooneers now stood with the detached iron part of their harpoons, some three feet long, held, barbs up, before him.

‘Stab me not with that keen steel! Cant them; cant them over! know ye not the goblet end? Turn up the socket! So, so; now, ye cup-bearers, advance. The irons! take them; hold them while I fill!’ Forthwith, slowly going from one officer to the other, he brimmed the harpoon sockets with the fiery waters from the pewter.

‘Now, three to three, ye stand. Commend the murderous chalices! Bestow them, ye who are now made parties to this indissoluble league. Ha! Starbuck! but the deed is done! Yon ratifying sun now waits to sit upon it. Drink, ye harpooneers! drink and swear, ye men that man the deathful whaleboat’s bow — Death to Moby Dick! God hunt us all, if we do not hunt Moby Dick to his death!’ The long, barbed steel goblets were lifted; and to cries and maledictions against the white whale, the spirits were simultaneously quaffed down with a hiss. Starbuck paled, and turned, and shivered. Once more, and finally, the replenished pewter went the rounds among the frantic crew; when, waving his free hand to them, they all dispersed; and Ahab retired within his cabin.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### SUNSET AND DUSK

*(The cabin; by the stern windows: Ahab sitting alone, and gazing out.)*

I LEAVE a white and turbid wake: pale waters, paler cheeks, where'er I sail. The envious billows sidelong swell to whelm my track: let them; but first I pass.

Yonder, by the ever-brimming goblet's rim, the warm waves blush like wine. The gold brow plumbs the blue. The diver sun — slow dived from noon, — goes down; my soul mounts up! she wearies with her endless hill. Is, then, the crown too heavy that I wear? this Iron Crown of Lombardy. Yet is it bright with many a gem; I, the wearer, see not its far flashings: but darkly feel that I wear that, that dazzlingly confounds. 'Tis iron — that I know — not gold. 'Tis split, too — that I feel; the jagged edge galls me so, my brain seems to beat against the solid metal; aye, steel skull, mine; the sort that needs no helmet in the most brain-battering fight!

Dry heat upon my brow? Oh! time was, when as the sunrise nobly spurred me, so the sunset soothed. No more. This lovely light, it lights not me; all loveliness is anguish to me, since I can ne'er enjoy. Gifted with the high perception, I lack the low, enjoying power; damned, most subtly and most malignantly! damned in the midst of Paradise! Good night — good night! *(Waving his hand, he moves from the window.)*



'Twas not so hard a task. I thought to find one stubborn, at the least; but my one cogged circle fits into all their various wheels, and they revolve. Or, if you will, like so many ant-hills of powder, they all stand before me; and I their match. Oh, hard! that to fire others, the match itself must needs be wasting! What I've dared, I've willed; and what I've willed, I'll do! They think me mad — Starbuck does; but I'm demoniac, I am madness maddened! That wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself! The prophecy was that I should be dismembered; and — Aye! I lost this leg. I now prophesy that I will dismember my dismemberer. Now, then, be the prophet and the fulfiller one. That's more than ye, ye great gods, ever were. I laugh and hoot at ye, ye cricketplayers, ye pugilists, ye deaf Burkes and blinded Bendigoes! I will not say as schoolboys do to bullies, — Take some one of your own size; don't pom-mel *me*! No, ye've knocked me down, and I am up again; but ye have run and hidden. Come forth from behind your cotton bags! I have no long gun to reach ye. Come, Ahab's compliments to ye; come and see if ye can swerve me. Swerve me? ye cannot swerve me, else ye swerve yourselves! man has ye there. Swerve me? The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. Over unsounded gorges, through the rifled hearts of mountains, under torrents' beds, unerringly I rush! Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way!

*By the Mainmast; Starbuck leaning against it.*

My soul is more than matched; she's overmanned; and by a madman! Insufferable sting, that sanity should



ground arms on such a field! But he drilled deep down, and blasted all my reason out of me! I think I see his impious end; but feel that I must help him to it. Will I, nill I, the ineffable thing has tied me to him; tows me with a cable I have no knife to cut. Horrible old man! Who's over him, he cries; — aye, he would be a democrat to all above; look, how he lords it over all below! Oh! I plainly see my miserable office, — to obey, rebelling; and worse yet, to hate with touch of pity! For in his eyes I read some lurid woe would shrivel me up, had I it. Yet is there hope. Time and tide flow wide. The hated whale has the round watery world to swim in, as the small gold-fish has its glassy globe. His heaven-insulting purpose, God may wedge aside. I would up heart, were it not like lead. But my whole clock's run down; my heart the all-controlling weight, I have no key to lift again.

*A burst of revelry from the fore-castle.*

Oh, God! to sail with such a heathen crew that have small touch of human mothers in them! Whelped somewhere by the sharkish sea. The white whale is their demigorgon. Hark! the infernal orgies! that revelry is forward! mark the unfaltering silence aft! Methinks it pictures life. Foremost through the sparkling sea shoots on the gay, embattled, bantering bow, but only to drag dark Ahab after it, where he broods within his sternward cabin, builded over the dead water of the wake, and further on, hunted by its wolfish gurglings. The long howl thrills me through! Peace! ye revellers, and set the watch! Oh, life! 'tis in an hour like this, with soul beat down and held to knowledge, — as wild, untutored



things are forced to feed — Oh, life! 'tis now that I do feel the latent horror in thee! but 'tis not me! that horror's out of me, and with the soft feeling of the human in me, yet will I try to fight ye, ye grim, phantom futures! Stand by me, hold me, bind me, O ye blessed influences!



## CHAPTER XXIX

### FIRST NIGHT-WATCH

*(Fore-top; Stubb solus, and mending a brace.)*

HA! ha! ha! ha! hem! clear my throat! — I've been thinking over it ever since, and that ha, ha's the final consequence. Why so? Because a laugh's the wisest, easiest answer to all that's queer; and come what will, one comfort's always left — that unfailing comfort is, it's all predestinated. I heard not all his talk with Starbuck; but to my poor eye Starbuck then looked something as I the other evening felt. Be sure the old Mogul has fixed him, too. I twigged it, knew it; had had the gift, might readily have prophesied it — for when I clapped my eye upon his skull I saw it. Well, Stubb, *wise* Stubb — that's my title — well, Stubb, what of it, Stubb? Here's a carcase. I know not all that may be coming, but be it what it will, I'll go to it laughing. Such a waggish leering as lurks in all your horrors! I feel funny. Fa, la! lirra, skirra! What's my juicy little pear at home doing now? Crying its eyes out? — Giving a party to the last arrived harpooneers, I dare say, gay as a frigate's pennant, and so am I — fa, la! lirra, skirra! Oh —

We'll drink to-night with hearts as light,  
To love, as gay and fleeting  
As bubbles that swim, on the beaker's brim,  
And break on the lips while meeting.



A brave stave that — who calls? Mr. Starbuck?  
Aye, aye, sir — (*Aside*) he's my superior, he has his too, if  
I'm not mistaken. — Aye, aye, sir, just through with  
this job — coming.



## CHAPTER XXX

MOBY DICK

I, ISHMAEL, was one of that crew; my shouts had gone up with the rest; my oath had been welded with theirs; and stronger I shouted, and more did I hammer and clinch my oath, because of the dread in my soul. A wild, mystical, sympathetical feeling was in me; Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine. With greedy ears I learned the history of that murderous monster against whom I and all the others had taken our oaths of violence and revenge.

For some time past, though at intervals only, the unaccompanied, secluded White Whale had haunted those uncivilized seas mostly frequented by the Sperm Whale fishermen. But not all of them knew of his existence; only a few of them, comparatively, had knowingly seen him; while the number who as yet had actually and knowingly given battle to him, was small indeed. For, owing to the large number of whale-cruisers; the disorderly way they were sprinkled over the entire watery circumference, many of them adventurously pushing their quest along solitary latitudes, so as seldom or never for a whole twelve-month or more on a stretch, to encounter a single news-telling sail of any sort; the inordinate length of each separate voyage; the irregularity of the times of sailing from home; all these, with other circumstances, direct and indirect, long obstructed the spread through the whole world-wide whaling-fleet of the special individualizing



tidings concerning Moby Dick. It was hardly to be doubted, that several vessels reported to have encountered, at such or such a time, or on such or such a meridian, a Sperm Whale of uncommon magnitude and malignity, which whale, after doing great mischief to his assailants, had completely escaped them; to some minds it was not an unfair presumption, I say, that the whale in question must have been no other than Moby Dick. Yet as of late the Sperm Whale fishery had been marked by various and not unfrequent instances of great ferocity, cunning, and malice in the monster attacked; therefore it was, that those who by accident ignorantly gave battle to Moby Dick; such hunters, perhaps, for the most part, were content to ascribe the peculiar terror he bred, more, as it were, to the perils of the Sperm Whale fishery at large, than to the individual cause. In that way, mostly, the disastrous encounter between Ahab and the whale had hitherto been popularly regarded.

And as for those who, previously hearing of the White Whale, by chance caught sight of him; in the beginning of the thing they had every one of them, almost, as boldly and fearlessly lowered for him, as for any other whale of that species. But at length, such calamities did ensue in these assaults — not restricted to sprained wrists and ankles, broken limbs, or devouring amputations — but fatal to the last degree of fatality; those repeated disastrous repulses, all accumulating and piling their terrors upon Moby Dick; those things had gone far to shake the fortitude of many brave hunters, to whom the story of the White Whale had eventually come.

Nor did wild rumors of all sorts fail to exaggerate, and still the more horrify the true histories of these deadly



encounters. And as the sea surpasses the land in this matter, so the whale fishery surpasses every other sort of maritime life, in the wonderfulness and fearfulness of the rumors which sometimes circulate there. For not only are whalers as a body unexempt from that ignorance and superstitiousness hereditary to all sailors; but of all sailors, they are by all odds the most directly brought into contact with whatever is appallingly astonishing in the sea; face to face they not only eye its greatest marvels, but, hand to jaw, give battle to them. Alone, in such remotest waters, that though you sailed a thousand miles, and passed a thousand shores, you would not come to any chiselled hearth-stone, or aught hospitable beneath that part of the sun; in such latitudes and longitudes, pursuing, too, such a calling as he does, the whaler is wrapped by influences all tending to make his fancy pregnant with many a mighty birth.

No wonder, then, that ever gathering volume from the mere transit over the wildest watery spaces, the outblown rumors of the White Whale did in the end incorporate with themselves all manner of morbid hints, and half-formed foetal suggestions of supernatural agencies, which eventually invested Moby Dick with new terrors unborrowed from anything that visibly appears. So that in many cases such a panic did he finally strike, that few who by those rumors, at least, had heard of the White Whale, few of those hunters were willing to encounter the perils of his jaw.

But there were still other and more vital practical influences at work. Not even at the present day has the original prestige of the Sperm Whale, as fearfully distinguished from all other species of the leviathan, died out of



the minds of the whalemén as a body. There are those this day among them, who, though intelligent and courageous enough in offering battle to the Greenland or Right whale, would perhaps — either from professional inexperience, or incompetency, or timidity, decline a contest with the Sperm Whale.

So that overawed by the rumors and portents concerning him, not a few of the fishermen recalled, in reference to Moby Dick, the earlier days of the Sperm Whale fishery, when it was oftentimes hard to induce long practised Right whalemén to embark in the perils of this new and daring warfare; such men protesting that although other leviathans might be hopefully pursued, yet to chase and point lances at such an apparition as the Sperm Whale was not for mortal man. That to attempt it, would be inevitably to be torn into a quick eternity. On this head, there are some remarkable documents that may be consulted.

Nevertheless, some there were, who even in the face of these things were ready to give chase to Moby Dick; and a still greater number who, chancing only to hear of him distantly and vaguely, without the specific details of any certain calamity, and without superstitious accompaniments, were sufficiently hardy not to flee from the battle if offered.

One of the wild suggestings referred to, as at last coming to be linked with the White Whale in the minds of the superstitiously inclined, was the unearthly conceit that Moby Dick was ubiquitous; that he had actually been encountered in opposite latitudes at one and the same instant of time.

Nor, credulous as such minds must have been, was this



conceit altogether without some faint show of superstitious probability. For as the secrets of the currents in the seas have never yet been divulged, even to the most erudite research; so the hidden ways of the Sperm Whale when beneath the surface remain, in great part, unaccountable to his pursuers; and from time to time have originated the most curious and contradictory speculations regarding them, especially concerning the mystic modes whereby, after sounding to a great depth, he transports himself with such vast swiftness to the most widely distant points.

Knowing that after repeated, intrepid assaults, the White Whale had escaped alive; it cannot be much matter of surprise that some whalers should go still further in their superstitions; declaring Moby Dick not only ubiquitous, but immortal (for immortality is but ubiquity in time); that though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim away unharmed; or if indeed he should ever be made to spout thick blood, such a sight would be but a ghastly deception; for again in unensanguined billows hundreds of leagues away, his unsullied jet would once more be seen.

But even stripped of these supernatural surmisings, there was enough in the earthly make and incontestable character of the monster to strike the imagination with unwonted power. For, it was not so much his uncommon bulk that so much distinguished him from other sperm whales, but, as was elsewhere thrown out -- a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidical white hump. These were his prominent features; the tokens whereby, even in the limitless, uncharted seas, he revealed his identity, at a long distance, to those who knew him.



The rest of his body was so streaked, and spotted, and marbled with the same shrouded hue, that, in the end, he had gained his distinctive appellation of the White Whale; a name, indeed, literally justified by his vivid aspect, when seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam, all spangled with golden gleamings.

Nor was it his unwonted magnitude, nor his remarkable hue, nor yet his deformed lower jaw, that so much invested the whale with natural terror, as that unexampled, intelligent malignity which, according to specific accounts, he had over and over again evinced in his assaults. More than all, his treacherous retreats struck more of dismay than perhaps aught else. For, when swimming before his exulting pursuers, with every apparent symptom of alarm, he had several times been known to turn round suddenly, and, bearing down upon them, either stave their boats to splinters, or drive them back in consternation to their ship.

Already several fatalities had attended his chase. But though similar disasters, however little bruited ashore, were by no means unusual in the fishery; yet, in most instances, such seemed the White Whale's infernal forethought of ferocity, that every dismembering or death that he caused, was not wholly regarded as having been inflicted by an unintelligent agent.

Judge, then, to what pitches of inflamed, distracted fury the minds of his more desperate hunters were impelled, when amid the chips of chewed boats, and the sinking limbs of torn comrades, they swam out of the white curds of the whale's direful wrath into the serene, exasperating sunlight, that smiled on, as if at a birth or a bridal.



His three boats stove around him, and oars and men both whirling in the eddies: one captain, seizing the line-knife from his broken prow, had dashed at the whale, as an Arkansas duellist at his foe, blindly seeking with a six inch blade to reach the fathom-deep life of the whale. That captain was Ahab. And then it was, that suddenly sweeping his sickle-shaped lower jaw beneath him, Moby Dick had reaped away Ahab's leg, as a mower a blade of grass in the field. No turbaned Turk, no hired Venetian or Malay, could have smote him with more seeming malice. Small reason was there to doubt, then, that ever since that almost fatal encounter, Ahab had cherished a wild vindictiveness against the whale, all the more fell for that in his frantic morbidness he at last came to identify with him, not only all his bodily woes, but all his intellectual and spiritual exasperations. The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac incarnation of all those malicious agencies which some deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with half a heart and half a lung. That intangible malignity which has been from the beginning; to whose dominion even the modern Christians ascribe one-half of the worlds; which the ancient Ophites of the east revered in their statue devil; — Ahab did not fall down and worship it like them; but deliriously transferring its idea to the abhorred White Whale, he pitted himself, all mutilated, against it. All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. He piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of all the general rage and



hate felt by his whole race from Adam down ; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart's shell upon it.

It is not probable that this monomania in him took its instant rise at the precise time of his bodily dismemberment. Then, in darting at the monster, knife in hand, he had but given loose to a sudden, passionate, corporal animosity ; and when he received the stroke that tore him, he probably but felt the agonizing bodily laceration, but nothing more. Yet, when by this collision forced to turn towards home, and for long months of days and weeks, Ahab and anguish lay stretched together in one hammock, rounding in mid winter that dreary, howling Patagonian Cape ; then it was, that his torn body and gashed soul bled into one another ; and so interfusing, made him mad. That it was only then, on the homeward voyage, after the encounter, that the final monomania seized him, seems all but certain from the fact that, at intervals during the passage, he was a raving lunatic ; and, though unlimbed of a leg, yet such vital strength yet lurked in his Egyptian chest, and was moreover intensified by his delirium, that his mates were forced to lace him fast, even there, as he sailed, raving in his hammock. In a strait-jacket, he swung to the mad rockings of the gales. And, when running into more sufferable latitudes, the ship, with mild stun'sails spread, floated across the tranquil tropics, and, to all appearances, the old man's delirium seemed left behind him with the Cape Horn swells, and he came forth from his dark den into the blessed light and air ; even then, when he bore that firm, collected front, however pale, and issued his calm orders once again ; and his mates thanked God the direful madness was now gone ; even then, Ahab,



in his hidden self, raved on. Human madness is oftentimes a cunning and most feline thing. When you think it fled, it may have but become transfigured into some still subtler form. Ahab's full lunacy subsided not, but deepeningly contracted; like the unabated Hudson, when that noble Northman flows narrowly, but unfathomably through the Highland gorge. But, as in his narrow-flowing monomania, not one jot of Ahab's broad madness had been left behind; so in that broad madness, not one jot of his great natural intellect had perished.

Now, in his heart, Ahab had some glimpse of this, namely: all my means are sane, my motive and my object mad. Yet without power to kill, or change, or shun the fact; he likewise knew that to mankind he did long dissemble; in some sort, did still. But that thing of his dissembling was only subject to his perceptibility, not to his will determinate. Nevertheless, so well did he succeed in that dissembling, that when with ivory leg he stepped ashore at last, no Nantucketer thought him otherwise than but naturally grieved, and that to the quick, with the terrible casualty which had overtaken him.

The report of his undeniable delirium at sea was likewise popularly ascribed to a kindred cause. And so too, all the added moodiness which always afterwards, to the very day of sailing in the *Pequod* on the present voyage, sat brooding on his brow. Nor is it so very unlikely, that far from distrusting his fitness for another whaling voyage, on account of such dark symptoms, the calculating people of that prudent isle were inclined to harbor the conceit, that for those very reasons he was all the better qualified and set on edge, for a pursuit so full of rage and wildness as the bloody hunt of whales. Gnawed within and scorched



without, with the infixed, unrelenting fangs of some incurable idea ; such an one, could he be found, would seem the very man to dart his iron and lift his lance against the most appalling of all brutes. Or, if for any reason thought to be corporeally incapacitated for that, yet such an one would seem superlatively competent to cheer and howl on his underlings to the attack. But be all this as it may, certain it is, that with the mad secret of his unabated rage bolted up and keyed in him, Ahab had purposely sailed upon the present voyage with the one only and all-engrossing object of hunting the White Whale. Had any one of his old acquaintances on shore but half dreamed of what was lurking in him then, how soon would their aghast and righteous souls have wrenched the ship from such a fiendish man ! They were bent on profitable cruises, the profit to be counted down in dollars from the mint. He was intent on an audacious, immitigable, and supernatural revenge.

Here, then, was this gray-headed, ungodly old man, chasing with curses a Job's whale round the world, at the head of a crew, too, chiefly made up of mongrel renegades, and castaways, and cannibals — morally enfeebled also, by the incompetence of mere unaided virtue or right-mindedness in Starbuck, the invulnerable jollity of indifference and recklessness in Stubb, and the pervading mediocrity in Flask. Such a crew, so officered, seemed specially picked and packed by some infernal fatality to help him to his monomaniac revenge. How it was that they so abundantly responded to the old man's ire — by what evil magic their souls were possessed, that at times his hate seemed almost theirs ; the White Whale as much their insufferable foe as his ; how all this came to be — what the White



Whale was to them, or how to their unconscious understandings, also, in some dim, unsuspected way, he might have seemed the gliding great demon of the seas of life, — all this to explain, would be to dive deeper than Ishmael can go. For one, I gave myself up to the abandonment of the time and the place; but while yet all a-rush to encounter the whale, could see naught in that brute but the deadliest ill.



## CHAPTER XXXI

HARK !

‘HIST ! Did you hear that noise, Cabaco?’

It was the middle-watch : a fair moonlight ; the seamen were standing in a cordon, extending from one of the fresh-water butts in the waist, to the scuttle-butt near the taffrail. In this manner, they passed the buckets to fill the scuttle-butt. Standing, for the most part, on the hallowed precincts of the quarter-deck, they were careful not to speak or rustle their feet. From hand to hand, the buckets went in the deepest silence, only broken by the occasional flap of a sail, and the steady hum of the unceasingly advancing keel.

It was in the midst of this repose, that Archy, one of the cordon, whose post was near the after-hatches, whispered to his neighbor, a Cholo, the words above.

‘Hist ! did you hear that noise, Cabaco?’

‘Take the bucket, will ye, Archy? what noise d’ye mean?’

‘There it is again — under the hatches — don’t you hear it — a cough — it sounded like a cough.’

‘Cough be damned ! Pass along that return bucket.’

‘There again — there it is ! — it sounds like two or three sleepers turning over, now !’

‘Caramba ! have done, shipmate, will ye? It’s the three soaked biscuits ye eat for supper turning over inside of ye — nothing else. Look to the bucket !’



‘Say what ye will, shipmate ; I’ve sharp ears.’

‘Aye, you are the chap, ain’t ye, that heard the hum of the old Quakeress’s knitting-needles fifty miles at sea from Nantucket ; you’re the chap.’

‘Grin away ; we’ll see what turns up. Hark ye, Cabaco, there is somebody down in the after-hold that has not yet been seen on deck ; and I suspect our old Mogul knows something of it too. I heard Stubb tell Flask, one morning watch, that there was something of that sort in the wind.’

‘Tish ! the bucket !’



## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE CHART

HAD you followed Captain Ahab down into his cabin after the squall that took place on the night succeeding that wild ratification of his purpose with his crew, you would have seen him go to a locker in the transom, and bringing out a large wrinkled roll of yellowish sea charts, spread them before him on his screwed-down table. Then seating himself before it, you would have seen him intently study the various lines and shadings which there met his eye; and with slow but steady pencil trace additional courses over spaces that before were blank. At intervals, he would refer to piles of old log-books beside him, wherein were set down the seasons and places in which, on various former voyages of various ships, sperm whales had been captured or seen.

While thus employed, the heavy pewter lamp suspended in chains over his head, continually rocked with the motion of the ship, and for ever threw shifting gleams and shadows of lines upon his wrinkled brow, till it almost seemed that while he himself was marking out lines and courses on the wrinkled charts, some invisible pencil was also tracing lines and courses upon the deeply marked chart of his forehead.

But it was not this night in particular that, in the solitude of his cabin, Ahab thus pondered over his charts. Almost every night they were brought out; almost every



night some pencil marks were effaced, and others were substituted. For with the charts of all four oceans before him, Ahab was threading a maze of currents and eddies, with a view to the more certain accomplishment of that monomaniac thought of his soul.

Now, to any one not fully acquainted with the ways of the leviathans, it might seem an absurdly hopeless task thus to seek out one solitary creature in the unhooped oceans of this planet. But not so did it seem to Ahab, who knew the sets of all tides and currents; and thereby calculating the driftings of the sperm whale's food; and, also, calling to mind the regular, ascertained seasons for hunting him in particular latitudes; could arrive at reasonable surmises, almost approaching to certainties, concerning the timeliest day to be upon this or that ground in search of his prey.

When making a passage from one feeding-ground to another, the sperm whales, guided by some infallible instinct — say, rather, secret intelligence from the Deity — mostly swim in *veins*, as they are called; continuing their way along a given ocean-line with such undeviating exactitude, that no ship ever sailed her course, by any chart, with one tithe of such marvellous precision. Though, in these cases, the direction taken by any one whale be straight as a surveyor's parallel, and though the line of advance be strictly confined to its own unavoidable, straight wake, yet the arbitrary *vein* in which at these times he is said to swim, generally embraces some few miles in width (more or less, as the vein is presumed to expand or contract); but never exceeds the visual sweep from the whale-ship's mast-heads, when circumspectly gliding along this magic zone. The sum is, that at particular seasons within that



breadth and along that path, migrating whales may with great confidence be looked for.

And hence not only at substantiated times, upon well known separate feeding-grounds, could Ahab hope to encounter his prey; but in crossing the widest expanses of water between those grounds he could, by his art, so place and time himself on his way, as even then not to be wholly without prospect of a meeting.

There was a circumstance which at first sight seemed to entangle his delirious but still methodical scheme. But not so in the reality, perhaps. Though the gregarious sperm whales have their regular seasons for particular grounds, yet in general you cannot conclude that the herds which haunted such and such a latitude or longitude this year, say, will turn out to be identically the same with those that were found there the preceding season; though there are peculiar and unquestionable instances where the contrary of this has proved true. In general, the same remark, only within a less wide limit, applies to the solitaires and hermits among the matured, aged sperm whales.

Where Ahab's chances of accomplishing his object have hitherto been spoken of, allusion has only been made to whatever way-side, antecedent, extra prospects were his, ere a particular set time or place were attained, when all possibilities would become probabilities, and, as Ahab fondly thought, every possibility the next thing to a certainty. That particular set time and place were conjoined in the one technical phrase — the Season-on-the-Line. For there and then, for several consecutive years, Moby Dick had been periodically descried, lingering in those waters for awhile, as the sun, in its annual round, loiters for a predicted interval in any one sign of the



Zodiac. There it was, too, that most of the deadly encounters with the White Whale had taken place; there the waves were storied with his deeds; there also was that tragic spot where the monomaniac old man had found the awful motive to his vengeance.

Now, the *Pequod* had sailed from Nantucket at the very beginning of the Season-on-the-Line. No possible endeavor then could enable her commander to make the great passage southwards, double Cape Horn, and then running down sixty degrees of latitude arrive in the equatorial Pacific in time to cruise there. Therefore, he must wait for the next ensuing season. Yet the premature hour of the *Pequod's* sailing had, perhaps, been correctly selected by Ahab, with a view to this very complexion of things. Because, an interval of three hundred and sixty-five days and nights was before him; an interval which, instead of impatiently enduring ashore, he would spend in a miscellaneous hunt; if by chance the White Whale, spending his vacation in seas far remote from his periodical feeding-grounds, should turn up his wrinkled brow off the Persian Gulf, or in the Bengal Bay, or China Seas, or in any other waters haunted by his race. So that Monsoons, Pampas, Nor-Westers, Harmattans, Trades; any wind but the Levanter and Simoom, might blow Moby Dick into the devious zig-zag world-circle of the *Pequod's* circumnavigating wake.

And have I not tallied the whale, Ahab would mutter to himself, as after poring over his charts till long after midnight he would throw himself back in reveries — tallied him, and shall he escape? Often, when forced from his hammock by exhausting and intolerably vivid dreams of the night, which, resuming his own intense thoughts through



the day, carried them on amid a clashing of frenzies, and whirled them round and round in his blazing brain, till the very throbbing of his life-spot became insufferable anguish; and when, as was sometimes the case, these spiritual throes in him heaved his being up from its base, and a chasm seemed opening in him, from which forked flames and lightnings shot up, and accursed fiends beckoned him to leap down among them; when this hell in himself yawned beneath him, a wild cry would be heard through the ship; and with glaring eyes Ahab would burst from his state room, as though escaping from a bed that was on fire.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### SURMISES

THOUGH, consumed with the hot fire of his purpose, Ahab in all his thoughts and actions ever had in view the ultimate capture of Moby Dick; though he seemed ready to sacrifice all mortal interests to that one passion; nevertheless it may have been that he was by nature and long habituation far too wedded to a fiery whaleman's ways, altogether to abandon the collateral prosecution of the voyage. Or at least if this were otherwise, there were not wanting other motives much more influential with him. It would be refining too much, perhaps, even considering his monomania, to hint that his vindictiveness towards the White Whale might have possibly extended itself in some degree to all sperm whales, and that the more monsters he slew by so much the more he multiplied the chances that each subsequently encountered whale would prove to be the hated one he hunted. But if such an hypothesis be indeed exceptionable, there were still additional considerations which, though not so strictly according with the wildness of his ruling passion, yet were by no means incapable of swaying him.

To accomplish his object Ahab must use tools; and of all tools used in the shadow of the moon, men are most apt to get out of order. He knew, for example, that however magnetic his ascendancy in some respects was over Starbuck, yet that ascendancy did not cover the complete



spiritual man any more than mere corporeal superiority involves intellectual mastership ; for to the purely spiritual, the intellectual but stand in a sort of corporeal relation. Starbuck's body and Starbuck's coerced will were Ahab's, so long as Ahab kept his magnet at Starbuck's brain ; still he knew that for all this the chief mate, in his soul, abhorred his captain's quest, and could he, would joyfully disintegrate himself from it, or even frustrate it. It might be that a long interval would elapse ere the White Whale was seen. During that long interval Starbuck would ever be apt to fall into open relapses of rebellion against his captain's leadership, unless some ordinary, prudential, circumstantial influences were brought to bear upon him. Not only that, but the subtle insanity of Ahab respecting Moby Dick was no ways more significantly manifested than in his superlative sense and shrewdness in foreseeing that, for the present, the hunt should in some way be stripped of that strange imaginative impioussness which naturally invested it ; that the full terror of the voyage must be kept withdrawn in to the obscure background (for few men's courage is proof against protracted meditation unrelieved by action) ; that when they stood their long night watches, his officers and men must have some nearer things to think of than Moby Dick. For however eagerly and impetuously the savage crew had hailed the announcement of his quest ; yet all sailors of all sorts are more or less capricious and unreliable — they live in the varying outer weather, and they inhale its fickleness — and when retained for any object remote and blank in the pursuit, however promissory of life and passion in the end, it is above all things requisite that temporary interests should hold them healthily suspended for the final dash.



Nor was Ahab unmindful of another thing. In times of strong emotion mankind disdain all base considerations; but such times are evanescent. The permanent constitutional condition of the manufactured man, thought Ahab, is sordidness. Granting that the White Whale fully incites the hearts of this my savage crew, and playing round their savageness even breeds a certain generous knight-errantism in them, still, while for the love of it they give chase to Moby Dick, they must also have food for their more common, daily appetites. For even the high lifted and chivalric Crusaders of old times were not content to traverse two thousand miles of land to fight for their holy sepulchre, without committing burglaries, picking pockets, and gaining other pious perquisites by the way. Had they been strictly held to their one final and romantic object — that final and romantic object, too many would have turned from in disgust. I will not strip these men,\* thought Ahab, of all hopes of cash — aye, cash. They may scorn cash now; but let some months go by, and no perspective promise of it to them, and then this same quiescent cash all at once mutinying in them, this same cash would soon cashier Ahab.

Nor was there wanting still another precautionary motive more related to Ahab personally. Having impulsively, it is probable, and perhaps somewhat prematurely revealed the prime but private purpose of the *Pequod's* voyage, Ahab was now entirely conscious that, in so doing, he had indirectly laid himself open to the unanswerable charge of usurpation; and with perfect impunity, both moral and legal, his crew if so disposed, and to that end competent, could refuse all further obedience to him, and even violently wrest from him the command. From



even the barely hinted imputation of usurpation, and the possible consequences of such a suppressed impression gaining ground, Ahab must of course have been most anxious to protect himself. That protection could only consist in his own predominating brain and heart and hand, backed by a heedful, closely calculating attention to every minute atmospheric influence which it was possible for his crew to be subjected to.

For all these reasons then, and others perhaps too analytic to be verbally developed here, Ahab plainly saw that he must still in a good degree continue true to the natural, nominal purpose of the *Pequod's* voyage.

Be all this as it may, his voice was now often heard hailing the three mast-heads and admonishing them to keep a bright look-out, and not omit reporting even a porpoise. This vigilance was not long without reward.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE MAT-MAKER

It was a cloudy, sultry afternoon; the seamen were lazily lounging about the decks, or vacantly gazing over into the lead-colored waters. Queequeg and I were mildly employed weaving what is called a sword-mat, for an additional lashing to our boat. So still and subdued and yet somehow preluding was all the scene, and such an incantation of revelry lurked in the air, that each silent sailor seemed resolved into his own invisible self.

I was the attendant or page of Queequeg, while busy at the mat. As I kept passing and repassing the filling or woof of marline between the long yarns of the warp, using my own hand for the shuttle, and as Queequeg, standing sideways, ever and anon slid his heavy oaken sword between the threads, and idly looking off upon the water, carelessly and unthinkingly drove home every yarn: so strange a dreaminess did there then reign all over the ship and all over the sea, only broken by the intermitting dull sound of the sword, that it seemed as if this were the Loom of Time, and I myself were a shuttle mechanically weaving and weaving away at the Fates.

Thus we were weaving and weaving away when I started at a sound so strange, long drawn, and musically wild and unearthly, that the ball of free will dropped from my hand, and I stood gazing up at the clouds whence that voice dropped like a wing. High aloft in the cross-trees was that



mad Gay-Header, Tashtego. His body was reaching eagerly forward, his hand stretched out like a wand, and at brief sudden intervals he continued his cries. To be sure the same sound was that very moment perhaps being heard all over the seas, from hundreds of whalemens look-outs perched as high in the air; but from few of those lungs could that accustomed old cry have derived such a marvellous cadence as from Tashtego the Indian's.

'There she blows! there! there! there! she blows! she blows!'

'Where-away?'

'On the lee-beam, about two miles off! a school of them!'

Instantly all was commotion.

The Sperm Whale blows as a clock ticks, with the same undeviating and reliable uniformity. And thereby whalemens distinguish this fish from other tribes of his genus.

'There go flukes!' was now the cry from Tashtego; and the whales disappeared.

'Quick, steward!' cried Ahab. 'Time! time!'

Dough-Boy hurried below, glanced at the watch, and reported the exact minute to Ahab.

The ship was now kept away from the wind, and she went gently rolling before it. Tashtego reporting that the whales had gone down heading to leeward, we confidently looked to see them again directly in advance of our bows. For that singular craft at times evinced by the Sperm Whale when, sounding with his head in one direction, he nevertheless, while concealed beneath the surface, mills round, and swiftly swims off in the opposite quarter — this deceitfulness of his could not now be in action; for there was no reason to suppose that the fish seen by Tashtego had been in any way alarmed, or indeed knew at all of our



vicinity. One of the men selected for shipkeepers – that is, those not appointed to the boats, by this time relieved the Indian at the main-mast head. The sailors at the fore and mizzen had come down; the line tubs were fixed in their places; the cranes were thrust out; the mainyard was backed, and the three boats swung over the sea like three samphire baskets over high cliffs. Outside of the bulwarks their eager crews with one hand clung to the rail, while one foot was expectantly poised on the gunwale. So look the long line of man-of-war's men about to throw themselves on board an enemy's ship.

But at this critical instant a sudden exclamation was heard that took every eye from the whale. With a start all glared at dark Ahab, who was surrounded by five dusky phantoms that seemed fresh formed out of air.



## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE FIRST LOWERING

THE phantoms, for so they then seemed, were flitting on the other side of the deck, and, with a noiseless celerity, were casting loose the tackles and bands of the boat which swung there. This boat had always been deemed one of the spare boats, though technically called the captain's, on account of its hanging from the starboard quarter. The figure that now stood by its bows was tall and swart, with one white tooth evilly protruding from its steel-like lips. A rumpled Chinese jacket of black cotton funereally invested him, with wide black trousers of the same dark stuff. But strangely crowning this ebonness was a glistening white plaited turban, the living hair braided and coiled round and round upon his head. Less swart in aspect, the companions of this figure were of that vivid, tiger-yellow complexion peculiar to some of the aboriginal natives of the Manillas; — a race notorious for a certain diabolism of subtilty, and by some honest white mariners supposed to be the paid spies and secret confidential agents on the water of the devil, their lord, whose counting-room they suppose to be elsewhere.

While yet the wondering ship's company were gazing upon these strangers, Ahab cried out to the white-turbaned old man at their head, 'All ready there, Fedallah?'

'Ready,' was the half-hissed reply.



‘Lower away then; d’ye hear?’ shouting across the deck. ‘Lower away there, I say.’



PREPARING FOR THE CHASE

Whales having been sighted, boats are lowered and sails are being set.

Such was the thunder of his voice, that spite of their amazement the men sprang over the rail; the sheaves whirled round in the blocks; with a wallow, the three boats dropped into the sea; while, with a dexterous, off-handed daring, unknown in any other vocation, the sailors, goat-like, leaped down the rolling ship's side into the tossed boats below.

Hardly had they pulled out from under the ship's lee, when a fourth keel, coming from the windward side, pulled round under the stern, and showed the five strangers rowing Ahab, who, standing erect in the stern, loudly hailed Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask, to spread themselves widely, so as to cover a large expanse of water. But with all their eyes again riveted upon the swart Fedallah and his crew, the inmates

of the other boats obeyed not the command.

‘Captain Ahab? — ’ said Starbuck.



‘Spread yourselves,’ cried Ahab; ‘give way, all four boats. Thou, Flask, pull out more to leeward!’

‘Aye, aye, sir,’ cheerily cried little King-Post, sweeping round his great steering oar. ‘Lay back!’ addressing his crew. ‘There! — there! — there again! There she blow right ahead, boys! — lay back!’

‘Never heed yonder yellow boys, Archy.’

‘Oh, I don’t mind ’em, sir,’ said Archy; ‘I knew it all before now. Didn’t I hear ’em in the hold? And didn’t I tell Cabaco here of it? What say ye, Cabaco? They are stowaways, Mr. Flask.’

‘Pull, pull, my fine hearts-alive; pull, my children; pull, my little ones,’ drawlingly and soothingly sighed Stubb to his crew, some of whom still showed signs of uneasiness. ‘Why don’t you break your backbones, my boys? What is it you stare at? Those chaps in yonder boat? Tut! They are only five more hands come to help us — never mind from where — the more the merrier. Pull, then, do pull; never mind the brimstone — devils are good fellows enough. So, so; there you are now; that’s the stroke for a thousand pounds; that’s the stroke to sweep the stakes! Hurrah for the gold cup of sperm oil, my heroes! Three cheers, men — all hearts alive! Easy, easy; don’t be in a hurry — don’t be in a hurry. Why don’t you snap your oars, you rascals? Bite something, you dogs! So, so, so, then; — softly, softly! That’s it — that’s it! long and strong. Give way there, give way! The devil fetch ye, ye ragamuffin rascallions; ye are all asleep. Stop snoring, ye sleepers, and pull. Pull, will ye? pull, can’t ye? pull, won’t ye? Why in the name of gudgeons and ginger-cakes don’t ye pull? — pull and break something! pull, and start your eyes out! Here!’



whipping out the sharp knife from his girdle; 'every mother's son of ye draw his knife, and pull with the blade between his teeth. That's it — that's it. Now ye do something; that looks like it, my steel-bits. Start her — start her, my silver-spoons! Start her, marling-spikes!'

Stubb's exordium to his crew is given here at large, because he had rather a peculiar way of talking to them in general, and especially in inculcating the religion of rowing. But you must not suppose from this specimen of his sermonizings that he ever flew into downright passions with his congregation. Not at all; and therein consisted his chief peculiarity. He would say the most terrific things to his crew, in a tone so strangely compounded of fun and fury, and the fury seemed so calculated merely as a spice to the fun, that no oarsman could hear such queer invocations without pulling for dear life, and yet pulling for the mere joke of the thing. Besides he all the time looked so easy and indolent himself, so loungingly managed his steering-oar, and so broadly gaped — open-mouthed at times — that the mere sight of such a yawning commander, by sheer force of contrast, acted like a charm upon the crew. Then again, Stubb was one of that odd sort of humorists, whose jollity is sometimes so curiously ambiguous, as to put all inferiors on their guard in the matter of obeying them.

In obedience to a sign from Ahab, Starbuck was now pulling obliquely across Stubb's bow; and when for a minute or so the two boats were pretty near to each other, Stubb hailed the mate.

'Mr. Starbuck! larboard boat, ahoy! a word with ye, sir, if ye please!'



'Halloa!' returned Starbuck, turning round not a single inch as he spoke; still earnestly but whisperingly urging his crew; his face set like a flint from Stubb's.

'What think ye of those yellow boys, sir!'

'Smuggled on board, somehow, before the ship sailed. (Strong, strong, boys!)' in a whisper to his crew, then speaking out loud again: 'A sad business, Mr. Stubb! (seethe her, seethe her, my lads!) but never mind, Mr. Stubb, all for the best. Let all your crew pull strong, come what will. (Spring, my men, spring!) There's hogsheads of sperm ahead, Mr. Stubb, and that's what ye came for. (Pull, my boys!) Sperm, sperm's the play! This at least is duty; duty and profit hand in hand.'

'Aye, aye, I thought as much,' soliloquized Stubb, when the boats diverged, 'as soon as I clapt eye on 'em, I thought so. Aye, and that's what he went into the after hold for, so often, as Dough-Boy long suspected. They were hidden down there. The White Whale's at the bottom of it. Well, well, so be it! Can't be helped! All right! Give way, men! It ain't the White Whale to-day! Give way!'

Now the advent of these outlandish strangers at such a critical instant as the lowering of the boats from the deck, this had not unreasonably awakened a sort of superstitious amazement in some of the ship's company; but Archy's fancied discovery having some time previous got abroad among them, though indeed not credited then, this had in some small measure prepared them for the event. It took off the extreme edge of their wonder; and so what with all this and Stubb's confident way of accounting for their appearance, they were for the time freed from superstitious surmisings; though the affair still left abundant room for all manner of wild conjectures as to dark Ahab's precise



agency in the matter from the beginning. For me, I silently recalled the mysterious shadows I had seen creeping on board the *Pequod* during the dim Nantucket dawn, as well as the enigmatical hintings of the unaccountable Elijah.

Meantime, Ahab, out of hearing of his officers, having sided the furthest to windward, was still ranging ahead of the other boats; a circumstance bespeaking how potent a crew was pulling him. Those tiger yellow creatures of his seemed all steel and whalebone; like five trip-hammers they rose and fell with regular strokes of strength, which periodically started the boat along the water like a horizontal burst boiler out of a Mississippi steamer. As for Fedallah, who was seen pulling the harpooneer oar, he had thrown aside his black jacket, and displayed his naked chest with the whole part of his body above the gunwale, clearly cut against the alternating depressions of the watery horizon; while at the other end of the boat Ahab, with one arm, like a fencer's, thrown half backward into the air, as if to counterbalance any tendency to trip; Ahab was seen steadily managing his steering oar as in a thousand boat lowerings ere the White Whale had torn him. All at once the outstretched arm gave a peculiar motion and then remained fixed, while the boat's five oars were seen simultaneously peaked. Boat and crew sat motionless on the sea. Instantly the three spread boats in the rear paused on their way. The whales had irregularly settled bodily down into the blue, thus giving no distantly discernible token of the movement, though from his closer vicinity Ahab had observed it.

'Every man look out along his oars!' cried Starbuck. 'Thou, Queequeg, stand up!'



Nimble springing up on the triangular raised box in the bow, the savage stood erect there, and with intensely eager eyes gazed off towards the spot where the chase had last been descried. Likewise upon the extreme stern of the boat where it was also triangularly platformed level with the gunwale, Starbuck himself was seen coolly and adroitly balancing himself to the jerking tossings of his chip of a craft, and silently eyeing the vast blue eye of the sea.

Not very far distant Flask's boat was also lying breathlessly still; its commander recklessly standing upon the top of the loggerhead, a stout sort of post rooted in the keel, and rising some two feet above the level of the stern platform. It is used for catching turns with the whale line. Its top is not more spacious than the palm of a man's hand, and standing upon such a base as that, Flask seemed perched at the mast-head of some ship which had sunk to all but her trucks. But little King-Post was small and short, and at the same time little King-Post was full of a large and tall ambition, so that this logger-head standpoint of his did by no means satisfy King-Post.

'I can't see three seas off; tip us up an oar there, and let me on to that.'

Upon this, Daggoo, with either hand upon the gunwale to steady his way, swiftly slid aft, and then erecting himself volunteered his lofty shoulders for a pedestal.

'Good a mast-head as any, sir. Will you mount?'

'That I will, and thank ye very much, my fine fellow; only I wish you fifty feet taller.'

Whereupon planting his feet firmly against two opposite planks of the boat, the gigantic negro, stooping a little, presented his flat palm to Flask's foot, and then putting Flask's hand on his hearse-plumed head and bidding him



spring as he himself should toss, with one dexterous fling landed the little man high and dry on his shoulders. And here was Flask now standing, Daggoo with one lifted arm furnishing him with a breastband to lean against and steady himself by.

At any time it is a strange sight to the tyro to see with what wondrous habitude of unconscious skill the whaler will maintain an erect posture in his boat, even when pitched about by the most riotously perverse and cross-running seas. Still more strange to see him giddily perched upon the logger-head itself, under such circumstances. But the sight of little Flask mounted upon gigantic Daggoo was yet more curious: for sustaining himself with a cool, indifferent, easy, unthought of, barbaric majesty, the noble negro to every roll of the sea harmoniously rolled his fine form. On his broad back, flaxen-haired Flask seemed a snow-flake. The bearer looked nobler than the rider. Though truly vivacious, tumultuous, ostentatious little Flask would now and then stamp with impatience; but not one added heave did he thereby give to the negro's lordly chest.

Meanwhile Stubb, the second mate, betrayed no such far-gazing solitudes. The whales might have made one of their regular soundings not a temporary dive from mere fright; and if that were the case, Stubb, as his wont in such cases, it seems, was resolved to solace the languishing interval with his pipe. He withdrew it from his hatband, where he always wore it aslant like a feather. He loaded it, and rammed home the loading with his thumb-end; but hardly had he ignited his match across the rough sand-paper of his hand, when Tashtego, his harpooneer, whose eyes had been setting to windward like two fixed stars,



suddenly dropped like light from his erect attitude to his seat, crying out in a quick frenzy of hurry, 'Down, down all, and give way! — there they are!'

To a landsman, no whale, nor any sign of a herring, would have been visible at that moment; nothing but a troubled bit of greenish white water, and thin scattered puffs of vapor hovering over it, and suffusingly blowing off to leeward, like the confused scud from white rolling billows. The air around suddenly vibrated and tingled, as it were, like the air over intensely heated plates of iron. Beneath this atmospheric waving and curling, and partially beneath a thin layer of water, also, the whales were swimming. Seen in advance of all the other indications, the puffs of vapor they spouted, seemed their forerunning couriers and detached flying outriders.

All four boats were now in keen pursuit of that one spot of troubled water and air. But it bade far to outstrip them; it flew on and on, as a mass of interblending bubbles borne down a rapid stream from the hills.

'Pull, pull, my good boys,' said Starbuck, in the lowest possible but intensest concentrated whisper to his men; while the sharp fixed glance from his eyes darted straight ahead of the bow, almost seemed as two visible needles in two unerring binnacle compasses. He did not say much to his crew, though, nor did his crew say anything to him. Only the silence of the boat was at intervals startlingly pierced by one of his peculiar whispers, now harsh with command, now soft with entreaty.

How different the loud little King-Post. 'Sing out and say something, my hearties. Roar and pull, my thunderbolts! Beach me, beach me on their black backs, boys; only do that for me, and I'll sign over to you my Martha's



Vineyard plantation, boys; including wife and children, boys. Lay me on — lay me on! O Lord, Lord! but I shall go stark, staring mad! See! see that white water!’ And so shouting, he pulled his hat from his head, and stamped up and down on it; then picking it up, flirited it far off upon the sea; and finally fell to rearing and plunging in the boat’s stern like a crazed colt from the prairie.

‘Look at that chap now,’ philosophically drawled Stubb, who, with his unlighted short pipe, mechanically retained between his teeth, at a short distance, followed after — ‘He’s got fits, that Flask has. Fits? yes, give him fits — that’s the very word — pitch fits into ’em. Merrily, merrily, hearts-alive. Pudding for supper, you know; — merry’s the word. Pull, babes — pull, sucklings — pull, all. But what the devil are you hurrying about? Softly, softly, and steadily, my men. Only pull, and keep pulling; nothing more. Crack all your backbones, and bite your knives in two — that’s all. Take it easy — why don’t ye take it easy, I say, and burst all your livers and lungs!’

But what it was that inscrutable Ahab said to that tiger-yellow crew of his — these were words best omitted here; for you live under the blessed light of the evangelical land. Only the infidel sharks in the audacious seas may give ear to such words, when, with tornado brow, and eyes of red murder, and foam-glued lips, Ahab leaped after his prey.

Meanwhile, all the boats tore on. The repeated specific allusions of Flask to ‘that whale,’ as he called the fictitious monster which he declared to be incessantly tantalizing his boat’s bow with its tail — these allusions of his were at times so vivid and life-like, that they would cause some one or two of his men to snatch a fearful look over his shoulder. But this was against all rule; for the oarsmen must



put out their eyes, and ram a skewer through their necks; usage pronouncing that they must have no organs but ears, and no limbs but arms, in these critical moments.

It was a sight full of quick wonder and awe! The vast swells of the omnipotent sea; the surging, hollow roar they made, as they rolled along the eight gunwales, like gigantic bowls in a boundless bowling-green; the brief suspended agony of the boat, as it would tip for an instant on the knife-like edge of the sharper waves, that almost seemed threatening to cut it in two; the sudden profound dip into the watery glens and hollows; the keen spurtings and goadings to gain the top of the opposite hill; the headlong, sled-like slide down its other side; — all these, with the cries of the headsmen and harpooneers, and the shuddering gasps of the oarsmen, with the wondrous sight of the ivory *Pequod* bearing down upon her boats with outstretched sails, like a wild hen after her screaming brood; — all this was thrilling.

The dancing white water made by the chase was now becoming more and more visible, owing to the increasing darkness of the dun cloud-shadows flung upon the sea. The jets of vapor no longer blended, but tilted everywhere to right and left; the whales seemed separating their wakes. The boats were pulled more apart; Starbuck giving chase to three whales running dead to leeward. Our sail was now set, and, with the still rising wind, we rushed along; the boat going with such madness through the water, that the lee oars could scarcely be worked rapidly enough to escape being torn from the row-locks.

Soon we were running through a suffusing wide veil of mist; neither ship nor boat to be seen.



‘Give way, men,’ whispered Starbuck, drawing still further aft the sheet of his sail; ‘there is time to kill a fish yet before the squall comes. There’s white water again! — close to! Spring!’

Soon after, two cries in quick succession on each side of us denoted that the other boats had got fast; but hardly were they overheard, when with a lightning-like hurtling whisper Starbuck said:

‘Stand up!’ and Queequeg, harpoon in hand, sprang to his feet.

Though not one of the oarsmen was then facing the life and death peril so close to them ahead, yet with their eyes on the intense countenance of the mate in the stern of the boat, they knew that the imminent instant had come; they heard, too, an enormous wallowing sound as of fifty elephants stirring in their litter. Meanwhile the boat was still booming through the mist, the waves curling and hissing around us like the erected crests of enraged serpents.

‘That’s his hump. *There, there*, give it to him!’ whispered Starbuck.

A short rushing sound leaped out of the boat; it was the darted iron of Queequeg. Then all in one welded commotion came an invisible push from astern, while forward the boat seemed striking on a ledge; the sail collapsed and exploded; a gush of scalding vapor shot up near by; something rolled and tumbled like an earthquake beneath us. The whole crew were half suffocated as they were tossed helter-skelter into the white curdling cream of the squall. Squall, whale, and harpoon had all blended together; and the whale, merely grazed by the iron, escaped.

Though completely swamped, the boat was nearly unharmed. Swimming round it we picked up the floating



oars, and lashing them across the gunwale, tumbled back to our places. There we sat up to our knees in the sea,



THE CAPTURE OF A BOWHEAD WHALE

The harpooner is poised ready to hurl the harpoon.

the water covering every rib and plank, so that to our downward gazing eyes the suspended craft seemed a coral boat grown up to us from the bottom of the ocean.



The wind increased to a howl; the waves dashed their bucklers together; the whole squall roared, forked, and crackled around us like a white fire upon the prairie, in which, unconsumed, we were burning; immortal in these jaws of death! In vain we hailed the other boats; as well roar to the live coals down the chimney of a flaming furnace as hail those boats in that storm. Meanwhile the driving scud, rack, and mist, grew darker with the shadows of night; no sign of the ship could be seen. The rising sea forbade all attempts to bale out the boat. The oars were useless as propellers, performing now the office of life-preservers. So, cutting the lashing of the waterproof match keg, after many failures Starbuck contrived to ignite the lamp in the lantern; then stretching it on a waif pole, handed it to Queequeg as the standard-bearer of this forlorn hope. There, then, he sat, holding up that imbecile candle in the heart of that almighty forlornness. There, then, he sat, the sign and symbol of a man without faith, hopelessly holding up hope in the midst of despair.

Wet, drenched through, and shivering cold, despairing of ship or boat, we lifted up our eyes as the dawn came on. The mist still spread over the sea, the empty lantern lay crushed in the bottom of the boat. Suddenly Queequeg started to his feet, hollowing his hand to his ear. We all heard a faint creaking, as of ropes and yards hitherto muffled by the storm. The sound came nearer and nearer; the thick mists were dimly parted by a huge, vague form. Affrighted, we all sprang into the sea as the ship at last loomed into view, bearing right down upon us within a distance of not much more than its length.

Floating on the waves we saw the abandoned boat, as for one instant it tossed and gaped beneath the ship's bows



like a chip at the base of a cataract ; and then the vast hull rolled over it, and it was seen no more till it came up weltering astern. Again we swam for it, were dashed against it by the seas, and were at last taken up and safely landed on board. Ere the squall came close to, the other boats had cut loose from their fish and returned to the ship in good time. The ship had given us up, but was still cruising, if haply it might light upon some token of our perishing, — an oar or a lance pole.

‘Queequeg,’ said I, when they had dragged me, the last man, to the deck, and I was still shaking myself in my jacket to fling off the water ; ‘Queequeg, my fine friend, does this sort of thing often happen?’ Without much emotion, though soaked through just like me, he gave me to understand that such things did often happen.

‘Mr. Stubb,’ said I, turning to that worthy, who, buttoned up in his oil-jacket, was now calmly smoking his pipe in the rain ; ‘Mr. Stubb, I think I have heard you say that of all whalemén you ever met, our chief mate, Mr. Starbuck, is by far the most careful and prudent. I suppose then, that going plump on a flying whale with your sail set in a foggy squall is the height of a whaleman’s discretion?’

‘Certain. I’ve lowered for whales from a leaking ship in a gale off Cape Horn.’

‘Mr. Flask,’ said I, turning to little King-Post, who was standing close by ; ‘you are experienced in these things, and I am not. Will you tell me whether it is an unalterable law in this fishery, Mr. Flask, for an oarsman to break his own back pulling himself back-foremost into death’s jaws?’

‘Can’t you twist that smaller?’ said Flask. ‘Yes, that’s the law. I should like to see a boat’s crew backing



water up to a whale face foremost. Ha, ha! the whale would give them squint for squint, mind that!’

Here then, from three impartial witnesses, I had a deliberate statement of the entire case. Considering, therefore, that squalls and capsizings in the water and consequent bivouacks on the deep, were matters of common occurrence in this kind of life; considering that at the superlatively critical instant of going on to the whale I must resign my life into the hands of him who steered the boat – oftentimes a fellow who at that very moment is in his impetuousness upon the point of scuttling the craft with his own frantic stampings; considering that the particular disaster to our own particular boat was chiefly to be imputed to Starbuck’s driving on to his whale almost in the teeth of a squall, and considering that Starbuck, notwithstanding, was famous for his great heedfulness in the fishery; considering that I belonged to this uncommonly prudent Starbuck’s boat; and finally considering in what a devil’s chase I was implicated, touching the White Whale: taking all things together, I say, I thought I might as well go below and make a rough draft of my will. ‘Queequeg,’ said I, ‘come along, you shall be my lawyer, executor, and legatee.’



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### AHAB'S BOAT AND CREW. FEDALLAH

'WHO would have thought it, Flask!' cried Stubb; 'if I had but one leg you would not catch me in a boat, unless maybe to stop the plug-hole with my timber toe. Oh! he's a wonderful old man!'

'I don't think it so strange, after all, on that account,' said Flask. 'If his leg were off at the hip, now, it would be a different thing. That would disable him; but he has one knee, and good part of the other left, you know.'

'I don't know that, my little man; I never yet saw him kneel.'

Among whale-wise people it has often been argued whether, considering the paramount importance of his life to the success of the voyage, it is right for a whaling captain to jeopardize that life in the active perils of the chase. So Tamerlane's soldiers often argued with tears in their eyes, whether that invaluable life of his ought to be carried into the thickest of the fight.

But with Ahab the question assumed a modified aspect. Considering that with two legs man is but a hobbling wight in all times of danger; considering that the pursuit of whales is always under great and extraordinary difficulties; that every individual moment, indeed, then comprises a peril; under these circumstances is it wise for any maimed man to enter a whale-boat in the hunt? As a general



thing, the joint-owners of the *Pequod* must have plainly thought not.

Ahab well knew that although his friends at home would think little of his entering a boat in certain comparatively harmless vicissitudes of the chase, for the sake of being near the scene of action and giving his orders in person, yet for Captain Ahab to have a boat actually apportioned to him as a regular headsman in the hunt — above all for Captain Ahab to be supplied with five extra men, as that same boat's crew, he well knew that such generous conceits never entered the heads of the owners of the *Pequod*. Therefore he had not solicited a boat's crew from them, nor had he in any way hinted his desires on that head. Nevertheless he had taken private measures of his own touching all that matter. Until Cabaco's published discovery, the sailors had little foreseen it, though to be sure when, after being a little while out of port, all hands had concluded the customary business of fitting the whaleboats for service: when some time after this Ahab was now and then found bestirring himself in the matter of making thole-pins with his own hands for what was thought to be one of the spare boats, and even solicitously cutting the small wooden skewers, which when the line is running out are pinned over the groove in the bow: when all this was observed in him, and particularly his solicitude in having an extra coat of sheathing in the bottom of the boat, as if to make it better withstand the point pressure of his ivory limb; and also the anxiety he evinced in exactly shaping the thigh board, or clumsy cleat, as it is sometimes called, the horizontal piece in the boat's bow for bracing the knee against in darting or stabbing at the whale; when it was observed how often he stood up in that boat with his solitary knee fixed



in the semi-circular depression in the cleat, and with the carpenter's chisel gouged out a little here and straightened it a little there ; all these things, I say, had awakened much interest and curiosity at the time. But almost everybody supposed that this particular preparative heedfulness in Ahab must only be with a view to the ultimate chase of Moby Dick ; for he had already revealed his intention to hunt that mortal monster in person. But such a supposition did by no means involve the remotest suspicion as to any boat's crew being assigned to that boat.

Now, with the subordinate phantoms, what wonder remained soon waned away ; for in a whaler wonders soon wane. Besides, now and then such unaccountable odds and ends of strange nations come up from the unknown nooks and ash-holes of the earth to man these floating outlaws of whalers ; and the ships themselves often pick up such queer castaway creatures found tossing about the open sea on planks, bits of wreck, oars, whale-boats, canoes, blown-off Japanese junks, and what not ; that Beelzebub himself might climb up the side and step down into the cabin to chat with the captain, and it would not create any unsubduable excitement in the fore-castle.

But be all this as it may, certain it is that while the subordinate phantoms soon found their place among the crew, though still as it were somehow distinct from them, yet that hair-turbaned Fedallah remained a muffled mystery to the last. Whence he came in a mannerly world like this, by what sort of unaccountable tie he soon evinced himself to be linked with Ahab's peculiar fortunes ; nay, so far as to have some sort of a half-hinted influence ; Heaven knows, but it might have been even authority over him ; all this none knew, but one cannot sustain an



indifferent air concerning Fedallah. He was such a creature as civilized, domestic people in the temperate zone only see in their dreams, and that but dimly; but the like of whom now and then glide among the unchanging Asiatic communities, especially the Oriental isles to the east of the continent — those insulated, immemorial, unalterable countries, which even in these modern days still preserve much of the ghostly aboriginalness of earth's primal generations, when the memory of the first man was a distinct recollection, and all men his descendants, unknowing whence he came, eyed each other as real phantoms, and asked of the sun and the moon why they were created and to what end.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

### SQUID

STEERING north-eastward from the Crozetts, we fell in with vast meadows of brit, the minute, yellow substance, upon which the Right Whale largely feeds. For leagues and leagues it undulated round us, so that we seemed to be sailing through boundless fields of ripe and golden wheat.

On the second day, numbers of Right Whales were seen, who, secure from the attack of a Sperm Whaler like the *Pequod*, with open jaws sluggishly swam through the brit, which, adhering to the fringing fibres of that wondrous Venetian blind in their mouths, was in that manner separated from the water that escaped at the lip.

Slowly wading through the meadows of brit, the *Pequod* still held on her way north-eastward towards the island of Java ; a gentle air impelling her keel, so that in the surrounding serenity her three tall tapering masts mildly waved to that languid breeze, as three mild palms on a plain. And still, at wide intervals in the silvery night, the lonely, alluring jet would be seen.

But one transparent blue morning, when a stillness almost preternatural spread over the sea, however unattended with any stagnant calm ; when the long burnished sun-glade on the waters seemed a golden finger laid across them, enjoining some secrecy ; when the slippered waves whispered together as they softly ran on ; in this pro-



found hush of the visible sphere a strange spectre was seen by Daggoo from the main-mast-head.

In the distance, a great white mass lazily rose, and rising higher and higher, and disentangling itself from the azure, at last gleamed before our prow like a snow-slide, new slid from the hills. Thus glistening for a moment, as slowly it subsided, and sank. Then once more arose, and silently gleamed. It seemed not a whale; and yet is this Moby Dick? thought Daggoo. Again the phantom went down, but on re-appearing once more, with a stiletto-like cry that startled every man from his nod, the negro yelled out 'There! there again! there she breaches! right ahead! The White Whale, the White Whale!'

Upon this, the seamen rushed to the yard-arms, as in swarming-time the bees rush to the boughs. Bare-headed in the sultry sun, Ahab stood on the bowsprit, and with one hand pushed far behind in readiness to wave his orders to the helmsman, cast his eager glance in the direction indicated aloft by the outstretched motionless arm of Daggoo.

Whether the flitting attendance of the one still and solitary jet had gradually worked upon Ahab, so that he was now prepared to connect the ideas of mildness and repose with the first sight of the particular whale he pursued; however this was, or whether his eagerness betrayed him; which ever way it might have been, no sooner did he distinctly perceive the white mass, than with a quick intensity he instantly gave orders for lowering.

The four boats were soon on the water; Ahab's in advance, and all swiftly pulling towards their prey. Soon it went down, and while, with oars suspended, we were awaiting its reappearance, lo! in the same spot where it sank,



once more it slowly rose. Almost forgetting for the moment all thoughts of Moby Dick, we now gazed at the most wondrous phenomenon which the secret seas have hitherto revealed to mankind. A vast pulpy mass, furlongs in length and breadth, of a glancing cream-color, lay floating on the water, innumerable long arms radiating from its centre, and curling and twisting like a nest of anacondas, as if blindly to catch at any hapless object within reach. No perceptible face or front did it have; no conceivable token of either sensation or instinct; but undulated there on the billows, an unearthly, formless, chance-like apparition of life.

As with a low sucking sound it slowly disappeared again, Starbuck still gazing at the agitated waters where it had sunk, with a wild voice exclaimed — ‘Almost rather had I seen Moby Dick and fought him, than to have seen thee, thou white ghost!’

‘What was it, Sir?’ said Flask.

‘The great live squid, which, they say, few whale-ships ever beheld, and returned to their ports to tell of it.’

But Ahab said nothing; turning his boat, he sailed back to the vessel; the rest as silently following.

Whatever superstitions the sperm whalemén in general have connected with the sight of this object, certain it is, that a glimpse of it being so very unusual, that circumstance has gone far to invest it with portentousness. So rarely is it beheld, that though one and all of them declare it to be the largest animated thing in the ocean, yet very few of them have any but the most vague ideas concerning its true nature and form; notwithstanding, they believe it to furnish to the sperm whale his only food. For though



other species of whales find their food above water, and may be seen by man in the act of feeding, the spermaceti whale obtains his whole food in unknown zones below the surface.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### THE LINE

WITH reference to the whaling scene shortly to be described, as well as for the better understanding of all similar scenes elsewhere presented, I have here to speak of the magical, sometimes horrible whale-line.

The line originally used in the fishery was of the best hemp, slightly vaped with tar, not impregnated with it, as in the case of ordinary ropes; for while tar, as ordinarily used, makes the hemp more pliable to the rope-maker, and also renders the rope itself more convenient to the sailor for common ship use; yet, not only would the ordinary quantity too much stiffen the whale-line for the close coiling to which it must be subjected; but as most seamen are beginning to learn, tar in general by no means adds to the rope's durability or strength, however much it may give it compactness and gloss.

Of late years the Manilla rope has in the American fishery almost entirely superseded hemp as a material for whale-lines; for, though not so durable as hemp, it is stronger, and far more soft and elastic; and I will add (since there is an æsthetics in all things), is much more handsome and becoming to the boat, than hemp. Hemp is a dusky, dark fellow, a sort of Indian; but Manilla is as a golden-haired Circassian to behold.

The whale-line is only two thirds of an inch in thickness. At first sight, you would not think it so strong as it really



is. By experiment its one and fifty yarns will each suspend a weight of one hundred and twenty pounds; so that the whole rope will bear a strain nearly equal to three tons. In length, the common sperm whale-line measures something over two hundred fathoms. Towards the stern of the boat it is spirally coiled away in the tub, not like the worm-pipe of a still though, but so as to form one round, cheese-shaped mass of densely bedded 'sheaves,' or layers of concentric spiralizations, without any hollow but the 'heart,' or minute vertical tube formed at the axis of the cheese. As the least tangle or kink in the coiling would, in running out, infallibly take somebody's arm, leg, or entire body off, the utmost precaution is used in stowing the line in its tub. Some harpooneers will consume almost an entire morning in this business carrying the line high aloft and then reeving it downwards through a block towards the tub, so as in the act of coiling to free it from all possible wrinkles and twists.

Both ends of the line are exposed; the lower end terminating in an eye-splice or loop coming up from the bottom against the side of the tub, and hanging over its edge completely disengaged from everything. This arrangement of the lower end is necessary on two accounts. First: In order to facilitate the fastening to it of an additional line from a neighboring boat, in case the stricken whale should sound so deep as to threaten to carry off the entire line originally attached to the harpoon. In these instances, the whale of course is shifted like a mug of ale, as it were, from the one boat to the other; though the first boat always hovers at hand to assist its consort. Second: This arrangement is indispensable for common safety's sake; for were the lower end of the line in any



way attached to the boat, and were the whale then to run the line out to the end almost in a single, smoking minute as he sometimes does, he would not stop there, for the doomed boat would infallibly be dragged down after him into the profundity of the sea; and in that case no town crier would ever find her again.

Before lowering the boat for the chase, the upper end of the line is taken aft from the tub, and passing round the loggerhead there, is again carried forward the entire length of the boat, resting crosswise upon the loom or handle of every man's oar, so that it jogs against his wrist in rowing; and also passing between the men, as they alternately sit at the opposite gunwales, to the leaded chocks or grooves in the extreme pointed prow of the boat, where a wooden pin or skewer the size of a common quill, prevents it from slipping out. From the chocks it hangs in a slight festoon over the bows, and is then passed inside the boat again; and some ten or twenty fathoms (called box-line) being coiled upon the box in the bows, it continues its way to the gunwale still a little further aft, and is then attached to the short-warp — the rope which is immediately connected with the harpoon; but previous to that connexion, the short-warp goes through sundry mystifications too tedious to detail.

Thus the whale-line folds the whole boat in its complicated coils, twisting and writhing around it in almost every direction. All the oarsmen are involved in its perilous contortions; so that to the timid eye of the landsman, they seem as Indian jugglers, with the deadliest snakes sportively festooning their limbs. Nor can any son of mortal woman, for the first time, seat himself amid those hempen intricacies, and while straining his utmost at the



oar, bethink him that at any unknown instant the harpoon may be darted, and all these horrible contortions be put in play like ringed lightnings; he cannot be thus circumstanced without a shudder that makes the very marrow in his bones to quiver in him like a shaken jelly. Yet habit — strange thing! what cannot habit accomplish? — Gayer sallies, more merry mirth, better jokes, and brighter repartees, you never heard over your mahogany, than you will hear over the half-inch white cedar of the whale-boat, when thus hung in hangman's nooses.

Perhaps a very little thought will now enable you to account for those repeated whaling disasters — some few of which are casually chronicled — of this man or that man being taken out of the boat by the line, and lost. For, when the line is darting out, to be seated then in the boat, is like being seated in the midst of the manifold whizzings of a steam-engine in full play, when every flying beam, and shaft, and wheel, is grazing you. It is worse; for you cannot sit motionless in the heart of these perils, because the boat is rocking like a cradle, and you are pitched one way and the other, without the slightest warning; and only by a certain self-adjusting buoyancy and simultaneousness of volition and action, can you escape being made a Mazeppa of, and run away with where the all-seeing sun himself could never pierce you out.



## CHAPTER XXXIX

### STUBB KILLS A WHALE

IF to Starbuck the apparition of the Squid was a thing of portents, to Queequeg it was quite a different object.

‘When you see him ’quid,’ said the savage, honing his harpoon in the bow of his hoisted boat, ‘then you quick see him ’parm whale.’

The next day was exceedingly still and sultry, and with nothing special to engage them, the *Pequod’s* crew could hardly resist the spell of sleep induced by such a vacant sea. For this part of the Indian Ocean through which we then were voyaging is not what whalers call a lively ground; that is, it affords fewer glimpses of porpoises, dolphins, flying-fish, and other vivacious denizens of more stirring waters, than those off the Rio de la Plata, or the in-shore ground off Peru.

It was my turn to stand at the foremast-head; and with my shoulders leaning against the slackened royal shrouds, to and fro I idly swayed in what seemed an enchanted air. No resolution could withstand it; in that dreamy mood losing all consciousness, at last my soul went out of my body; though my body still continued to sway as a pendulum will, long after the power which first moved it is withdrawn.

Ere forgetfulness altogether came over me, I had noticed that the seamen at the main and mizzen mast-heads were already drowsy. So that at last all three of us lifelessly



swung from the spars, and for every swing that we made there was a nod from below from the slumbering helmsman. The waves, too, nodded their indolent crests; and across the wide trance of the sea, east nodded to west, and the sun over all.

Suddenly bubbles seemed bursting beneath my closed eyes; like vices my hands grasped the shrouds; some invisible, gracious agency preserved me; with a shock I came back to life. And lo! close under our lee, not forty fathoms off, a gigantic Sperm Whale lay rolling in the water like the capsized hull of a frigate, his broad, glossy back, of an Ethiopian hue, glistening in the sun's rays like a mirror. But lazily undulating in the trough of the sea, and ever and anon tranquilly spouting his vapory jet, the whale looked like a portly burgher smoking his pipe of a warm afternoon. But that pipe, poor whale, was thy last. As if struck by some enchanter's wand, the sleepy ship and every sleeper in it all at once started into wakefulness; and more than a score of voices from all parts of the vessel, simultaneously with the three notes from aloft, shouted forth the accustomed cry, as the great fish slowly and regularly spouted the sparkling brine into the air.

'Clear away the boats! Luff!' cried Ahab. And obeying his own order, he dashed the helm down before the helmsman could handle the spokes.

The sudden exclamations of the crew must have alarmed the whale; and ere the boats were down, majestically turning, he swam away to the leeward, but with such a steady tranquillity, and making so few ripples as he swam, that thinking after all he might not as yet be alarmed, Ahab gave orders that not an oar should be used, and no man must speak but in whispers. So seated like Ontario



Indians on the gunwales of the boats, we swiftly but silently paddled along; the calm not admitting of the noiseless sails being set. Presently, as we thus glided in chase, the monster perpendicularly flitted his tail forty feet into the air, and then sank out of sight like a tower swallowed up.

‘There go flukes!’ was the cry, an announcement immediately followed by Stubb’s producing his match and igniting his pipe, for now a respite was granted. After the full interval of his sounding had elapsed, the whale rose again, and being now in advance of the smoker’s boat, and much nearer to it than to any of the others, Stubb counted upon the honor of the capture. It was obvious, now, that the whale had at length become aware of his pursuers. All silence of cautiousness was therefore no longer of use. Paddles were dropped, and oars came loudly into play. And still puffing at his pipe, Stubb cheered on his crew to the assault.

Yes, a mighty change had come over the fish. All alive to his jeopardy, he was going ‘head out’; that part obliquely projecting from the mad yeast which he brewed.<sup>1</sup>

‘Start her, start her, my men! Don’t hurry yourselves; take plenty of time — but start her; start her like thunder-claps, that’s all,’ cried Stubb, spluttering out the smoke as

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<sup>1</sup> It will be seen in some other place of what a very light substance the entire interior of the sperm whale’s enormous head consists. Though apparently the most massive, it is by far the most buoyant part about him. So that with ease he elevates it in the air, and invariably does so when going at his utmost speed. Besides, such is the breadth of the upper part of the front of his head, and such the tapering cut-water formation of the lower part, that by obliquely elevating his head, he thereby may be said to transform himself from a bluff-bowed sluggish galliot into a sharp-pointed New York pilot-boat.



he spoke. 'Start her, now; give 'em the long and strong stroke, Tashtego. Start her, Tash, my boy — start her, all; but keep cool, keep cool — cucumbers is the word — easy, easy — only start her like grim death and grinning devils, and raise the buried dead perpendicular out of their graves, boys — that's all. Start her!'

'Woo-hoo! Wa-hee!' screamed the Gay-Header in reply, raising some old war-whoop to the skies; as every oarsman in the strained boat involuntarily bounced forward with the one tremendous leading stroke which the eager Indian gave.

But his wild screams were answered by others quite as wild. 'Kee-hee! Kee-hee!' yelled Daggoo, straining forwards and backwards on his seat, like a pacing tiger in his cage.

'Ka-la! Koo-loo!' howled Queequeg, as if smacking his lips over a mouthful of Grenadier's steak. And thus with oars and yells the keels cut the sea. Meanwhile, Stubb retaining his place in the van, still encouraged his men to the onset, all the while puffing the smoke from his mouth. Like desperadoes they tugged and they strained, till the welcome cry was heard — 'Stand up, Tashtego! — give it to him!' The harpoon was hurled. 'Stern all!' The oarsmen backed water; the same moment something went hot and hissing along every one of their wrists. It was the magical line. An instant before, Stubb had swiftly caught two additional turns with it round the loggerhead, whence, by reason of its increased rapid circlings, a hempen blue smoke now jetted up and mingled with the steady fumes from his pipe. As the line passed round and round the loggerhead; so also, just before reaching that point, it blisteringly passed through and through both



of Stubb's hands, from which the hand-cloths, or squares of quilted canvas sometimes worn at these times, had accidentally dropped. It was like holding an enemy's sharp two-edged sword by the blade, and that enemy all the time striving to wrest it out of your clutch.



A 'NANTUCKET SLEIGH RIDE'

The boat in the foreground is 'fast' to the whale in the upper right of the picture. Such a ride through the flying waters is called a 'Nantucket sleigh ride.'

'Wet the line! wet the line!' cried Stubb to the tub oarsman (him seated by the tub) who, snatching off his hat, dashed the sea-water into it.<sup>1</sup> More turns were

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<sup>1</sup> Partly to show the indispensableness of this act, it may here be stated, that, in the old Dutch fishery, a mop was used to dash the running line with water; in many other ships, a wooden piggin, or bailer, is set apart for that purpose. Your hat, however, is the most convenient.



taken, so that the line began holding its place. The boat now flew through the boiling water like a shark all fins. Stubb and Tashtego here changed places — stem for stern — a staggering business truly in that rocking commotion.

From the vibrating line extending the entire length of the upper part of the boat, and from its now being more tight than a harpstring, you would have thought the craft had two keels — one cleaving the water, the other the air — as the boat churned on through both opposing elements at once. A continual cascade played at the bows: a ceaseless whirling eddy in her wake; and, at the slightest motion from within, even but of a little finger, the vibrating, cracking craft canted over her spasmodic gunwale into the sea. Thus they rushed; each man with might and main clinging to his seat, to prevent being tossed to the foam; and the tall form of Tashtego at the steering oar crouching almost double, in order to bring down his centre of gravity. Whole Atlantics and Pacifics seemed passed as they shot on their way, till at length the whale somewhat slackened his flight.

‘Haul in — haul in!’ cried Stubb to the bowsman; and, facing round towards the whale, all hands began pulling the boat up to him, while yet the boat was being towed on. Soon ranging up by his flank, Stubb, firmly planting his knee in the clumsy cleat, darted dart after dart into the flying fish; at the word of command, the boat alternately sterning out of the way of the whale’s horrible wallow, and then ranging up for another fling.

The red tide now poured from all sides of the monster like brooks down a hill. His tormented body rolled not in brine but in blood, which bubbled and seethed for furlongs



behind in their wake. The slanting sun playing upon this crimson pond in the sea, sent back its reflection into every face, so that they all glowed to each other like red men. And all the while, jet after jet of white smoke was agonizingly shot from the spiracle of the whale, and vehement puff after puff from the mouth of the excited headsman; as at every dart, hauling in upon his crooked lance (by the line attached to it), Stubb straightened it again and again, by a few rapid blows against the gunwale, then again and again sent it into the whale.

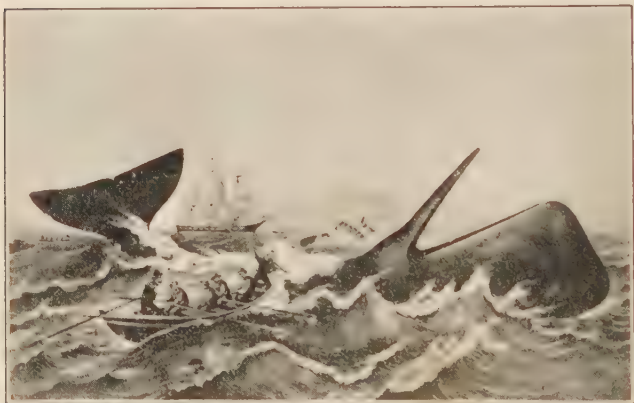
‘Pull up — pull up!’ he now cried to the bowsman, as the waning whale relaxed in his wrath. ‘Pull up! — close to!’ and the boat ranged along the fish’s flank. When reaching far over the bow, Stubb slowly churned his long sharp lance into the fish, and kept it there, carefully churning and churning, as if cautiously seeking to feel after some gold watch that the whale might have swallowed, and which he was fearful of breaking ere he could hook it out. But that gold watch he sought was the innermost life of the fish. And now it is struck; for, starting from his trance into that unspeakable thing called his ‘flurry,’ the monster horribly wallowed in his blood, overwrapped himself in impenetrable, mad, boiling spray, so that the imperilled craft, instantly dropping astern, had much ado blindly to struggle out from that frenzied twilight into the clear air of the day.

And now abating in his flurry, the whale once more rolled out into view; surging from side to side; spasmodically dilating and contracting his spout-hole, with sharp, cracking, agonized respirations. At last, gush after gush of clotted red gore, as if it had been the purple lees of red wine, shot into the frightened air; and falling



back again, ran dripping down his motionless flanks into the sea. His heart had burst!

‘He’s dead, Mr. Stubb,’ said Daggoo.



THE CAPTURE OF A SPERM WHALE

From a lithograph by Endicott & Co., New York, 1862.

‘Yes; both pipes smoked out!’ and withdrawing his own from his mouth, Stubb scattered the dead ashes over the water; and, for a moment, stood thoughtfully eyeing the vast corpse he had made.



## CHAPTER XL

### THE DART AND THE CROTCH

A WORD concerning an incident in the last chapter. According to the invariable usage of the fishery, the whale-boat pushes off from the ship, with the headsman or whale-killer as temporary steersman, and the harpooneer or whale-fastener pulling the foremost oar, the one known as the harpooneer-oar. Now it needs a strong, nervous arm to strike the first iron into the fish ; for often, in what is called a long dart, the heavy implement has to be flung to the distance of twenty or thirty feet. But however prolonged and exhausting the chase, the harpooneer is expected to pull his oar meanwhile to the uttermost ; indeed, he is expected to set an example of superhuman activity to the rest, not only by incredible rowing, but by repeated loud and intrepid exclamations ; and what it is to keep shouting at the top of one's compass, while all the other muscles are strained and half started — what that is none know but those who have tried it. For one, I cannot bawl very heartily and work very recklessly at one and the same time. In this straining, bawling state, then, with his back to the fish, all at once the exhausted harpooneer hears the exciting cry — 'Stand up, and give it to him !' He now has to drop and secure his oar, turn round on his centre half way, seize his harpoon from the crotch, and with what little strength may remain, he essays to pitch it somehow into the whale. No wonder, taking the whole



fleet of whalemén in a body, that out of fifty fair chances for a dart, not five are successful ; no wonder that so many hapless harpooneers are madly cursed and disrated ; no wonder that some of them actually burst their blood-vessels in the boat ; no wonder that some sperm whalemén are absent four years with four barrels ; no wonder that to many ship owners, whaling is but a losing concern ; for it is the harpooneer that makes the voyage, and if you take the breath out of his body how can you expect to find it there when most wanted !

Again, if the dart be successful, then at the second critical instant, that is, when the whale starts to run, the boat-header and harpooneer likewise start to running fore and aft, to the imminent jeopardy of themselves and every one else. It is then they change places ; and the headsman, the chief officer of the little craft, takes his proper station in the bows of the boat.

Now, I care not who maintains the contrary, but all this is both foolish and unnecessary. The headsman should stay in the bows from first to last ; he should both dart the harpoon and the lance, and no rowing whatever should be expected of him, except under circumstances obvious to any fisherman. I know that this would sometimes involve a slight loss of speed in the chase ; but long experience in various whalemén of more than one nation has convinced me that in the vast majority of failures in the fishery, it has not by any means been so much the speed of the whale as the before described exhaustion of the harpooneer that has caused them.

To insure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooneers of this world must start to their feet from out of idleness, and not from out of toil.



The crotch alluded to on a previous page deserves independent mention. It is a notched stick of a peculiar form, some two feet in length, which is perpendicularly inserted into the starboard gunwale near the bow, for the purpose of furnishing a rest for the wooden extremity of the harpoon, whose other naked, barbed end slopingly projects from the prow. Thereby the weapon is instantly at hand to its hurler, who snatches it up as readily from its rest as a backwoodsman swings his rifle from the wall. It is customary to have two harpoons reposing in the crotch, respectively called the first and second irons.

But these two harpoons, each by its own cord, are both connected with the line; the object being this: to dart them both, if possible, one instantly after the other into the same whale; so that if, in the coming drag, one should draw out, the other may still retain a hold. It is a doubling of the chances. But it very often happens that owing to the instantaneous, violent, convulsive running of the whale upon receiving the first iron, it becomes impossible for the harpooneer, however lightning-like in his movements, to pitch the second iron into him. Nevertheless, as the second iron is already connected with the line, and the line is running, hence that weapon must, at all events, be anticipatorily tossed out of the boat, somehow and somewhere; else the most terrible jeopardy would involve all hands. Tumbled into the water, it accordingly is in such cases; the spare coils of box line (mentioned in a preceding chapter) making this feat, in most instances, prudently practicable. But this critical act is not always unattended with the saddest and most fatal casualties.

Furthermore: you must know that when the second iron is thrown overboard, it thenceforth becomes a dan-



gling, sharp-edged terror, skittishly curvetting about both boat and whale, entangling the lines, or cutting them, and making a prodigious sensation in all directions. Nor, in general, is it possible to secure it again until the whale is fairly captured and a corpse.

Consider, now, how it must be in the case of four boats all engaging one unusually strong, active, and knowing whale; when owing to these qualities in him, as well as to the thousand concurring accidents of such an audacious enterprise, eight or ten loose second irons may be simultaneously dangling about him. For, of course, each boat is supplied with several harpoons to bend on to the line should the first one be ineffectually darted without recovery. All these particulars are faithfully narrated here, as they will not fail to elucidate several most important, however intricate passages, in scenes hereafter to be painted.



## CHAPTER XLI

### CUTTING IN

It was a Saturday night, and such a Sabbath as followed ! Ex officio professors of Sabbath breaking are all whalemen. The ivory *Pequod* was turned into what seemed a shamble; every sailor a butcher. You would have thought we were offering up ten thousand red oxen to the sea gods.

In the first place, the enormous cutting tackles, among other ponderous things comprising a cluster of blocks generally painted green, and which no single man can possibly lift — this vast bunch of grapes was swayed up to the main-top and firmly lashed to the lower mast-head, the strongest point anywhere above a ship's deck. The end of the hawser-like rope winding through these intricacies, was then conducted to the windlass, and the huge lower block of the tackles was swung over the whale; to this block the great blubber hook, weighing some one hundred pounds, was attached. And now suspended in stages over the side, Starbuck and Stubb, the mates armed with their long spades, began cutting a hole in the body for the insertion of the hook just above the nearest of the two side-fins. This done, a broad, semicircular line is cut round the hole, the hook is inserted, and the main body of the crew striking up a wild chorus, now commence heaving in one dense crowd at the windlass. When instantly, the entire ship careens over on her side; every



bolt in her starts like the nailheads of an old house in frosty weather; she trembles, quivers, and nods her frightened mastheads to the sky. More and more she leans over to the whale, while every gasping heave of the windlass is answered by a helping heave from the billows; till at last, a swift, startling snap is heard; with a great swash the ship rolls upwards and backwards from the whale, and the triumphant tackle rises into sight dragging after it the disengaged semicircular end of the first strip of blubber. Now as the blubber envelopes the whale precisely as the rind does an orange, so is it stripped off from the body precisely as an orange is sometimes stripped by spiralizing it. For the strain constantly kept up by the windlass continually keeps the whale rolling over and over in the water, and as the blubber in one strip uniformly peels off along the line called the 'scarf,' simultaneously cut by the spades of Starbuck and Stubb, the mates; and just as fast as it is thus peeled off, and indeed by that very act itself, it is all the time being hoisted higher and higher aloft till its upper end grazes the main-top; the men at the windlass then cease heaving, and for a moment or two the prodigious blood-dripping mass sways to and fro as if let down from the sky, and every one present must take good heed to dodge it when it swings, else it may box his ears and pitch him headlong overboard.

One of the attending harpooneers now advances with a long, keen weapon called a boarding-sword, and watching his chance he dexterously slices out a considerable hole in the lower part of the swaying mass. Into this hole, the end of the second alternating great tackle is then hooked so as to retain a hold upon the blubber, in order to prepare for what follows. Whereupon, this accomplished swords-





### CUTTING IN A SPERM WHALE

The blubber is hoisted to the deck in long strips as the whale rolls over and over.



man, warning all hands to stand off, once more makes a scientific dash at the mass, and with a few sidelong, desperate, lunging slicings, severs it completely in twain; so that while the short lower part is still fast, the long upper strip, called a blanket-piece, swings clear, and is all ready for lowering. The heavers forward now resume their song, and while the one tackle is peeling and hoisting a second strip from the whale, the other is slowly slackened away, and down goes the first strip through the main hatchway right beneath, into an unfurnished parlor called the blubber-room. Into this twilight apartment sundry nimble hands keep coiling away the long blanket-piece as if it were a great live mass of plaited serpents. And thus the work proceeds: the two tackles hoisting and lowering simultaneously; both whale and windlass heaving, the heavers singing, the blubber-room gentlemen coiling, the mates scarfing, the ship straining, and all hands swearing occasionally, by way of assuaging the general friction.

A word or two more concerning this matter of the skin or blubber of the whale. It has already been said, that it is stript from him in long pieces, called blanket-pieces. Like most sea-terms, this one is very happy and significant. For the whale is indeed wrapt up in his blubber as in a real blanket or counterpane; or, still better, an Indian poncho slipt over his head, and skirting his extremity. It is by reason of this cosy blanketing of his body, that the whale is enabled to keep himself comfortable in all weathers, in all seas, times, and tides. What would become of a Greenland whale, say, in those shuddering, icy seas of the North, if unsupplied with his cosy surtout? True, other fish are found exceedingly brisk in those Hyperborean



waters; but these, be it observed, are your cold-blooded, lungless fish, whose very bellies are refrigerators; creatures, that warm themselves under the lee of an iceberg, as a traveller in winter would bask before an inn fire; whereas, like man, the whale has lungs and warm blood. Freeze his blood, and he dies. How wonderful is it then — except after explanation — that this great monster, to whom corporeal warmth is as indispensable as it is to man; how wonderful that he should be found at home, immersed to his lips for life in those Arctic waters! where, when seamen fall overboard, they are sometimes found, months afterwards, perpendicularly frozen into the hearts of fields of ice, as a fly is found glued in amber. But more surprising is it to know, as has been proved by experiment, that the blood of a Polar whale is warmer than that of a Borneo negro in summer.

‘Haul in the chains! Let the carcass go astern!’

The vast tackles have now done their duty. The peeled white body of the beheaded whale flashes like a marble sepulchre; though changed in hue, it has not perceptibly lost anything in bulk. It is still colossal. Slowly it floats more and more away, the water round it torn and splashed by the insatiate sharks, and the air above vexed with rapacious flights of screaming fowls, whose beaks are like so many insulting poniards in the whale.



## CHAPTER XLII

### THE MONKEY-ROPE

IT should not have been omitted that previous to completely stripping the body of the leviathan, he was beheaded. Now, the beheading of the Sperm Whale is a scientific anatomical feat, upon which experienced whale surgeons very much pride themselves: and not without reason.

Consider that the whale has nothing that can properly be called a neck; on the contrary, where his head and body seem to join, there, in that very place, is the thickest part of him. Remember, also, that the surgeon must operate from above, some eight or ten feet intervening between him and his subject, and that subject almost hidden in a discolored, rolling, and oftentimes tumultuous and bursting sea. Bear in mind, too, that under these untoward circumstances he has to cut many feet deep in the flesh; and in that subterraneous manner, without so much as getting one single peep into the ever-contracting gash thus made, he must skilfully steer clear of all adjacent, interdicted parts, and exactly divide the spine at a critical point hard by its insertion into the skull. Do you not marvel, then, at Stubb's boast, that he demanded but ten minutes to behead a sperm whale?

When first severed, the head is dropped astern and held there by a cable till the body is stripped. That done, if it belong to a small whale it is hoisted on deck to be deliber-





### HOISTING THE LOWER JAW ON BOARD

The men on the stage are severing the jaw with cutting-spades.



ately disposed of. But, with a full grown leviathan this is impossible; for the Sperm Whale's head embraces nearly one third of his entire bulk, and completely to suspend such a burden as that, even by the immense tackles of a whaler, this were as vain a thing as to attempt weighing a Dutch barn in jewellers' scales.



THE LOWER JAW OF A SPERM WHALE

The spar of this jaw measured eighteen feet; the jaw pans, seven feet.

The *Pequod's* whale being decapitated and the body stripped, the head was hoisted against the ship's side — about half way out of the sea, so that it might yet in great part be buoyed up by its native element. And there with the strained craft steeply leaning over it, by reason of the enormous downward drag from the lower mast-head, and every yard-arm on that side projecting like a crane over the waves; there, that blood-dripping head hung to the



*Pequod's* waist like the giant Holofernes's from the girdle of Judith.

When this last task was accomplished it was noon, and the seamen went below to their dinner. Silence reigned over the now deserted deck.

In the tumultuous business of cutting-in and attending to a whale, there is much running backwards and forwards among the crew. Now hands are wanted here, and then again hands are wanted there. There is no staying in any one place; for at one and the same time everything has to be done everywhere. It is much the same with him who endeavors the description of the scene. We must now retrace our way a little. It was mentioned that upon first breaking ground in the whale's back, the blubber-hook was inserted into the original hole there cut by the spades of the mates. But how did so clumsy and weighty a mass as that same hook get fixed in that hole? It was inserted there by my particular friend Queequeg, whose duty it was, as harpooneer, to descend upon the monster's back for the special purpose referred to. But in very many cases, circumstances require that the harpooneer shall remain on the whale till the whole flensing or stripping operation is concluded. The whale, be it observed, lies almost entirely submerged, excepting the immediate parts operated upon. So down there, some ten feet below the level of the deck, the poor harpooneer flounders about, half on the whale and half in the water, as the vast mass revolves like a treadmill beneath him. On the occasion in question, Queequeg figured in the Highland costume — a shirt and socks — in which to my eyes, at least, he appeared to uncommon advantage; and no one had a better chance to observe him, as will presently be seen.



Being the savage's bowsman, that is, the person who pulled the bow-oar in his boat (the second one from forward), it was my cheerful duty to attend upon him while taking that hard-scrabble scramble upon the dead whale's back. You have seen Italian organ-boys holding a dancing-ape by a long cord. Just so, from the ship's steep side, did I hold Queequeg down there in the sea, by what is technically called in the fishery a monkey-rope, attached to a strong strip of canvas belted round his waist.

It was a humorously perilous business for both of us. For, before we proceed further, it must be said that the monkey-rope was fast at both ends: fast to Queequeg's broad canvas belt, and fast to my narrow leather one. So that for better or for worse, we two, for the time, were wedded; and should poor Queequeg sink to rise no more, then both usage and honor demanded, that instead of cutting the cord, it should drag me down in his wake. So, then, an elongated Siamese ligature united us. Queequeg was my own inseparable twin brother; nor could I any way get rid of the dangerous liabilities which the hempen bond entailed.

But handle Queequeg's monkey-rope heedfully as I would, sometimes he jerked it so, that I came very near sliding overboard. Nor could I possibly forget that, do what I would, I only had the management of one end of it.<sup>1</sup>

I have hinted that I would often jerk poor Queequeg from between the whale and the ship — where he would

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<sup>1</sup> The monkey rope is found in all whalers; but it was only in the *Pequod* that the monkey and his holder were ever tied together. This improvement upon the original usage was introduced by no less a man than Stubb, in order to afford to the imperilled harpooneer the strongest possible guarantee for the faithfulness and vigilance of his monkey-rope holder.



occasionally fall, from the incessant rolling and swaying of both. But this was not the only jamming jeopardy he was exposed to. Unappalled by the massacre made upon them during the night, the sharks now freshly and more keenly allured by the before pent blood which began to flow from the carcase — the rabid creatures swarmed round it like bees in a beehive.

And right in among those sharks was Queequeg; who often pushed them aside with his floundering feet. A thing altogether incredible were it not that attracted by such prey as a dead whale, the otherwise miscellaneous carnivorous shark will seldom touch a man.

Nevertheless, it may well be believed that since they have such a ravenous finger in the pie, it is deemed but wise to look sharp to them. Accordingly, besides the monkey-rope, with which I now and then jerked the poor fellow from too close a vicinity to the maw of what seemed a peculiarly ferocious shark — he was provided with still another protection. Suspended over the side in one of the stages, Tashtego and Daggoo continually flourished over his head a couple of keen whale-spades, wherewith they slaughtered as many sharks as they could reach. This procedure of theirs, to be sure, was very disinterested and benevolent of them. They meant Queequeg's best happiness, I admit; but in their hasty zeal to befriend him, and from the circumstance that both he and the sharks were at times half hidden by the blood-mudded water, those indiscreet spades of theirs would come nearer amputating a leg than a tail. But poor Queequeg, I suppose, straining and gasping there with that great iron hook — poor Queequeg, I suppose, only prayed to his Yojo, and gave up his life into the hands of his gods.



But courage! there is good cheer in store for you, Queequeg. For now, as with blue lips and bloodshot eyes the exhausted savage at last climbs up the chains and stands all dripping and involuntarily trembling over the side; the steward advances, and with a benevolent, consolatory glance hands him — what? Some hot Cogniac? No! hands him, ye gods! hands him a cup of tepid ginger and water!

‘Ginger? Do I smell ginger?’ suspiciously asked Stubb, coming near. ‘Yes, this must be ginger,’ peering into the as yet untasted cup. Then standing as if incredulous for a while, he calmly walked towards the astonished steward slowly saying, ‘Ginger? ginger? and will you have the goodness to tell me, Mr. Dough-Boy, where lies the virtue of ginger? Ginger! is ginger the sort of fuel you use, Dough-Boy, to kindle a fire in this shivering cannibal? Ginger! — what the devil is ginger? — sea-coal? — fire-wood? — lucifer matches? — tinder? — gunpowder? — what the devil is ginger, I say, that you offer this cup to our poor Queequeg here?’

‘There is some sneaking Temperance Society movement about this business,’ he suddenly added, now approaching Starbuck, who had just come from forward. ‘Will you look at that cannikin, sir: smell of it, if you please? May I ask whether this is the sort of bitters by which he blows back the life into a half-drowned man?’

‘I trust not,’ said Starbuck, ‘it is poor stuff enough.’

‘Aye, aye, steward,’ cried Stubb, ‘we’ll teach you to drug a harpooneer; none of your apothecary’s medicine here; you want to poison us, do ye? You have got out insurances on our lives and want to murder us all, and pocket the proceeds, do ye?’



‘It was not me,’ cried Dough-Boy, ‘it was Aunt Charity that brought the ginger on board; and bade me never give the harpooneers any spirits, but only this ginger-jub — so she called it.’

‘Ginger-jub! you gingerly rascal! take that! and run along with ye to the lockers, and get something better. I hope I do no wrong, Mr. Starbuck. It is the captain’s orders — grog for the harpooneer on a whale.’

‘Enough,’ replied Starbuck, ‘only don’t hit him again, but ——’

‘Oh, I never hurt when I hit, except when I hit a whale or something of that sort; and this fellow’s a weazel. What were you about saying, sir?’

‘Only this: go down with him, and get what thou wantest thyself.’

When Stubb reappeared, he came with a dark flask in one hand, and a sort of tea-caddy in the other. The first contained strong spirits, and was handed to Queequeg; the second was Aunt Charity’s gift, and that was freely given to the waves.



## CHAPTER XLIII

### CISTERN AND BUCKETS

Now comes the Baling of the Case. But to comprehend it aright, you must know something of the curious internal structure of the thing operated upon.

Regarding the Sperm Whale's head as a solid oblong, you may, on an inclined plane, sideways divide it into two quoins,<sup>1</sup> whereof the lower is the bony structure, forming the cranium and jaws, and the upper an unctuous mass wholly free from bones: its broad forward end forming the expanded vertical apparent forehead of the whale. At the middle of the forehead horizontally subdivide this upper quoin, and then you have two almost equal parts, which before were naturally divided by an internal wall of a thick tendinous substance.

The lower subdivided part, called the junk, is one immense honeycomb of oil, formed by the crossing and re-crossing, into ten thousand infiltrated cells, of tough elastic white fibres throughout its whole extent. The upper part, known as the Case, may be regarded as the great Heidelberg Tun of the Sperm Whale. And as that famous great tierce is mystically carved in front, so the whale's

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<sup>1</sup> Quoin is not a Euclidean term. It belongs to the pure nautical mathematics. I know not that it has been defined before. A quoin is a solid which differs from a wedge in having its sharp end formed by the steep inclination of one side, instead of the mutual tapering of both sides.





### THE JUNK

The junk, or lower half of the sperm whale's forehead, is, with the exception of the case, the most valuable portion of the whale.



vast plaited forehead forms innumerable strange devices for emblematical adornment of his wondrous tun. Moreover, as that of Heidelburgh was always replenished with the most excellent of the wines of the Rhenish valleys, so the tun of the whale contains by far the most precious of all his oily vintages; namely, the highly-prized spermaceti, in its absolutely pure, limpid, and odoriferous state. Nor is this precious substance found unalloyed in any other part of the creature. Though in life it remains perfectly fluid, yet, upon exposure to the air, after death, it soon begins to concrete; sending forth beautiful crystalline shoots, as when the first thin delicate ice is just forming in water. A large whale's case generally yields about five hundred gallons of sperm, though from unavoidable circumstances, considerable of it is spilled, leaks, and dribbles away, or is otherwise irrevocably lost in the ticklish business of securing what you can.

It will have been seen that the Heidelburgh Tun of the Sperm Whale embraces the entire length of the entire top of the head; and since — as has been elsewhere set forth — the head embraces one third of the whole length of the creature, then setting that length down at eighty feet for a good sized whale, you have more than twenty-six feet for the depth of the tun, when it is lengthwise hoisted up and down against a ship's side.

As in decapitating the whale, the operator's instrument is brought close to the spot where an entrance is subsequently forced into the spermaceti magazine; he has, therefore, to be uncommonly heedful, lest a careless, untimely stroke should invade the sanctuary and wastingly let out its invaluable contents. It is this decapitated end of the head, also, which is at last elevated out of the water,



and retained in that position by the enormous cutting tackles, whose hempen combinations, on one side, make quite a wilderness of ropes in that quarter.

Thus much being said, attend now, I pray you, to that marvellous and — in this particular instance — almost fatal operation whereby the Sperm Whale's great Heidelberg Tun is tapped.

Nimble as a cat, Tashtego mounts aloft; and without altering his erect posture, runs straight out upon the overhanging mainyard-arm, to the part where it exactly projects over the hoisted Tun. He has carried with him a light tackle called a whip, consisting of only two parts, travelling through a single-sheaved block. Securing this block, so that it hangs down from the yard-arm, he swings one end of the rope, till it is caught and firmly held by a hand on the deck. Then, hand-over-hand, down the other part, the Indian drops through the air, till dexterously he lands on the summit of the head. There — still high elevated above the rest of the company, to whom he vivaciously cries — he seems some Turkish Muezzin calling the good people to prayers from the top of a tower. A short-handled sharp spade being sent up to him, he diligently searches for the proper place to begin breaking into the Tun. In this business he proceeds very heedfully, like a treasure-hunter in some old house, sounding the walls to find where the gold is masoned in. By the time this cautious search is over, a stout iron-bound bucket, precisely like a well-bucket, has been attached to one end of the whip; while the other end, being stretched across the deck, is there held by two or three alert hands. These last now hoist the bucket within grasp of the Indian, to whom another person has reached up a very long pole. Inserting



this pole into the bucket, Tashtego downward guides the bucket into the Tun, till it entirely disappears; then giving the word to the seamen at the whip, up comes the bucket again, all bubbling like a dairy-maid's pail of new milk. Carefully lowered from its height, the full-freighted vessel is caught by an appointed hand, and quickly emptied into



WHALING GEAR IN THE BOURNE WHALING MUSEUM, NEW BEDFORD

Spades, blubber knives, and dippers are hanging on the wall. The large chain at the left is a jaw-strap and the bucket at the right is used in baling the case.

a large tub. Then re-mounting aloft, it again goes through the same round until the deep cistern will yield no more. Towards the end, Tashtego has to ram his long pole harder and harder, and deeper and deeper into the Tun, until some twenty feet of the pole have gone down.

Now, the people of the *Pequod* had been baling some time in this way; several tubs had been filled with the fragrant sperm; when all at once a queer accident happened. Whether it was that Tashtego, that wild Indian,



was so heedless and reckless as to let go for a moment his one-handed hold on the great cabled tackles suspending the head ; or whether the place where he stood was so treacherous and oozy ; or whether the Evil One himself would have it to fall out so, without stating his particular reasons ; how it was exactly, there is no telling now ; but, on a sudden, as the eightieth or ninetieth bucket came suckingly up — poor Tashtego — like the twin reciprocating bucket in a veritable well, dropped head-foremost down into this great Tun of Heidelburgh, and with a horrible oily gurgling, went clean out of sight !

‘Man overboard !’ cried Daggoo, who amid the general consternation first came to his senses. ‘Swing the bucket this way !’ and putting one foot into it, so as the better to secure his slippery hand-hold on the whip itself, the hoisters ran him high up to the top of the head, almost before Tashtego could have reached its interior bottom. Meantime, there was a terrible tumult. Looking over the side, they saw the before lifeless head throbbing and heaving just below the surface of the sea, as if that moment seized with some momentous idea ; whereas it was only the poor Indian unconsciously revealing by those struggles the perilous depth to which he had sunk.

At this instant, while Daggoo, on the summit of the head, was clearing the whip — which had somehow got foul of the great cutting tackles — a sharp cracking noise was heard ; and to the unspeakable horror of all, one of the two enormous hooks suspending the head tore out, and with a vast vibration the enormous mass sideways swung, till the drunk ship reeled and shook as if smitten by an iceberg. The one remaining hook, upon which the entire strain now depended, seemed every instant to be on the point of giving



way; an event still more likely from the violent motions of the head.

'Come down, come down!' yelled the seamen to Daggoo, but with one hand holding on to the heavy tackles, so that if the head should drop, he would still remain suspended; the negro having cleared the foul line, rammed down the bucket into the now collapsed well, meaning that the buried harpooneer should grasp it, and so be hoisted out.

'In heaven's name, man,' cried Stubb, 'are you ramming home a cartridge there? — Avast! How will that help him; jamming that iron-bound bucket on top of his head? Avast, will ye!'

'Stand clear of the tackle!' cried a voice like the bursting of a rocket.

Almost in the same instant, with a thunder-boom, the enormous mass dropped into the sea, like Niagara's Table-Rock into the whirlpool; the suddenly relieved hull rolled away from it, to far down her glittering copper; and all caught their breath, as half swinging — now over the sailors' heads, and now over the water — Daggoo, through a thick mist of spray, was dimly beheld clinging to the pendulous tackles, while poor, buried-alive Tash-tego was sinking utterly down to the bottom of the sea! But hardly had the blinding vapor cleared away, when a naked figure with a boarding-sword in his hand, was for one swift moment seen hovering over the bulwarks. The next, a loud splash announced that my brave Queequeg had dived to the rescue. One packed rush was made to the side, and every eye counted every ripple, as moment followed moment, and no sign of either the sinker or the diver could be seen. Some hands now jumped into a boat along side, and pushed a little off from the ship.



‘Ha! ha!’ cried Daggoo, all at once, from his now quiet, swinging perch overhead; and looking further off from the side, we saw an arm thrust upright from the blue waves; a sight strange to see, as an arm thrust forth from the grass over a grave.

‘Both! both! — it is both!’ — cried Daggoo again with a joyful shout; and soon after, Queequeg was seen boldly striking out with one hand, and with the other clutching the long hair of the Indian. Drawn into the waiting boat, they were quickly brought to the deck; but Tashtego was long in coming to, and Queequeg did not look very brisk.

Now, how had this noble rescue been accomplished? Why, diving after the slowly descending head, Queequeg with his keen sword had made side lunges near its bottom, so as to scuttle a large hole there; then dropping his sword, had thrust his long arm far inwards and upwards, and so hauled out our poor Tash by the head. He averred, that upon first thrusting in for him, a leg was presented; but well knowing that that was not as it ought to be, and might occasion great trouble; — he had thrust back the leg, and by a dexterous heave and toss, had wrought a somerset upon the Indian; so that with the next trial, he came forth — head foremost.

And thus, through the courage and great skill of Queequeg, the deliverance of Tashtego was successfully accomplished, in the teeth, too, of the most untoward and apparently hopeless impediments; which is a lesson by no means to be forgotten.



## CHAPTER XLIV

### PITCHPOLING

To make them run easily and swiftly, the axles of carriages are anointed; and for much the same purpose, some whalers perform an analogous operation upon their boat; they grease the bottom. Nor is it to be doubted that as such a procedure can do no harm, it may possibly be of no contemptible advantage; considering that oil and water are hostile; that oil is a sliding thing, and that the object in view is to make the boat slide bravely. Queequeg believed strongly in anointing his boat, and one morning took more than customary pains in that occupation; crawling under its bottom, where it hung over the side, and rubbing in the unctuousness as though diligently seeking to insure a crop of hair from the craft's bald keel. He seemed to be working in obedience to some particular presentiment. Nor did it remain unwarranted by the event.

Towards noon whales were raised; but so soon as the ship sailed down to them, they turned and fled with swift precipitancy; a disordered flight, as of Cleopatra's barges from Actium.

Nevertheless, the boats pursued, and Stubb's was foremost. By great exertion, Tashtego at last succeeded in planting one iron; but the stricken whale, without at all sounding, still continued his horizontal flight, with added fleetness. Such unintermitted strainings upon the planted iron must sooner or later inevitably extract it. It became



imperative to lance the flying whale, or be content to lose him. But to haul the boat up to his flank was impossible, he swam so fast and furious. What then remained?

Of all the wondrous devices and dexterities, the sleights of hand and countless subtleties, to which the veteran whaleman is so often forced, none exceed that fine manœuvre with the lance called pitchpoling. Small sword, or broad sword, in all its exercises boasts nothing like it. It is only indispensable with an inveterate running whale; its grand fact and feature is the wonderful distance to which the long lance is accurately darted from a violently rocking, jerking boat, under extreme headway. Steel and wood included, the entire spear is some ten or twelve feet in length; the staff is much slighter than that of the harpoon, and also of a lighter material — pine. It is furnished with a small rope called a warp, of considerable length, by which it can be hauled back to the hand after darting.

But before going further, it is important to mention here, that though the harpoon may be pitchpoled in the same way with the lance, yet it is seldom done; and when done, is still less frequently successful, on account of the greater weight and inferior length of the harpoon as compared with the lance, which in effect become serious drawbacks. As a general thing, therefore, you must first get fast to a whale, before any pitchpoling comes into play.

Look now at Stubb; a man who from his humorous, deliberate coolness and equanimity in the direst emergencies, was specially qualified to excel in pitchpoling. Look at him; he stands upright in the tossed bow of the flying boat; wrapt in fleecy foam, the towing whale is forty feet ahead. Handling the long lance lightly, glancing twice or



thrice along its length to see if it be exactly straight Stubb whistlingly gathers up the coil of the warp in one hand, so as to secure its free end in his grasp, leaving the rest unobstructed. Then holding the lance full before his waistband's middle, he levels it at the whale; when, covering him with it, he steadily depresses the butt-end in his hand, thereby elevating the point till the weapon stands fairly balanced upon his palm, fifteen feet in the air. He minds you somewhat of a juggler, balancing a long staff on his chin. Next moment with a rapid, nameless impulse, in a superb lofty arch the bright steel spans the foaming distance, and quivers in the life spot of the whale. Instead of sparkling water, he now spouts red blood.

'That drove the spigot out of him!' cries Stubb. 'Tis July's immortal Fourth; all fountains must run wine to-day! Would now, it were old Orleans whiskey, or old Ohio, or unspeakable old Monongahela! Then, Tashtego, lad, I'd have ye hold a cannikin to the jet, and we'd drink round it! Yea, verily, hearts alive, we'd brew choice punch in the spread of his spout-hole there, and from that live punch-bowl quaff the living stuff.'

Again and again to such gamesome talk, the dexterous dart is repeated, the spear returning to its master like a greyhound held in skilful leash. The agonized whale goes into his flurry; the towline is slackened, and the pitch-poler dropping astern, folds his hands, and mutely watches the monster die.



## CHAPTER XLV

### THE FOUNTAIN

THAT for six thousand years — and no one knows how many millions of ages before — the great whales should have been spouting all over the sea, and sprinkling and mistifying the gardens of the deep, as with so many sprinkling or mistifying pots; and that for some centuries back, thousands of hunters should have been close by the fountain of the whale, watching these sprinklings and spoutings — that all this should be, and yet, that down to this blessed minute (fifteen and a quarter minutes past one o'clock P.M. of this sixteenth day of December, A.D. 1851), it should still remain a problem, whether these spoutings are, after all, really water, or nothing but vapor — this is surely a noteworthy thing.

Let us, then, look at this matter, along with some interesting items contingent. Every one knows that by the peculiar cunning of their gills, the finny tribes in general breathe the air which at all times is combined with the element in which they swim; hence, a herring or a cod might live a century, and never once raise its head above the surface. But owing to his marked internal structure which gives him regular lungs, like a human being's, the whale can only live by inhaling the disengaged air in the open atmosphere. Wherefore the necessity for his periodical visits to the upper world. But he cannot in any degree breathe through his mouth, for, in his ordinary attitude, the



Sperm Whale's mouth is buried at least eight feet beneath the surface; and what is still more, his windpipe has no connexion with his mouth. No, he breathes through his spiracle alone; and this is on the top of his head.

If I say, that in any creature breathing is only a function indispensable to vitality, inasmuch as it withdraws from the air a certain element, which being subsequently brought into contact with the blood imparts to the blood its vivifying principle, I do not think I shall err; though I may possibly use some superfluous scientific words. Assume it, and it follows that if all the blood in a man could be aerated with one breath, he might then seal up his nostrils and not fetch another for a considerable time. That is to say, he would then live without breathing. Anomalous as it may seem, this is precisely the case with the whale, who systematically lives, by intervals, his full hour and more (when at the bottom) without drawing a single breath, or so much as in any way inhaling a particle of air; for, remember, he has no gills. How is this? Between his ribs and on each side of his spine he is supplied with a remarkable involved Cretan labyrinth of vermicelli-like vessels, which vessels, when he quits the surface, are completely distended with oxygenated blood. So that for an hour or more, a thousand fathoms in the sea, he carries a surplus stock of vitality in him, just as the camel crossing the waterless desert carries a surplus supply of drink for future use in its four supplementary stomachs. The anatomical fact of this labyrinth is indisputable; and that the supposition founded upon it is reasonable and true, seems the more cogent to me, when I consider the otherwise inexplicable obstinacy of that leviathan in *having his spoutings out*, as the fishermen phrase it. This is what I mean.



If unmolested, upon rising to the surface, the Sperm Whale will continue there for a period of time exactly uniform with all his other unmolested risings. Say he stays eleven minutes, and jets seventy times, that is, respire seventy breaths; then whenever he rises again, he will be sure to have his seventy breaths over again, to a minute. Now, if after he fetches a few breaths you alarm him, so that he sounds, he will be always dodging up again to make good his regular allowance of air. And not till those seventy breaths are told, will he finally go down to stay out his full term below. Remark, however, that in different individuals these rates are different; but in any one they are alike. Now, why should the whale thus insist upon having his spoutings out, unless it be to replenish his reservoir of air, ere descending for good? How obvious is it, too, that this necessity for the whale's rising exposes him to all the fatal hazards of the chase. For not by hook or by net could this vast leviathan be caught, when sailing a thousand fathoms beneath the sunlight. Not so much thy skill, then, O hunter, as the great necessities that strike the victory to thee!

In man, breathing is incessantly going on — one breath only serving for two or three pulsations; so that whatever other business he has to attend to, waking or sleeping, breathe he must, or die he will. But the Sperm Whale only breathes about one seventh or Sunday of his time.

It has been said that the whale only breathes through his spout-hole; if it could truthfully be added that his spouts are mixed with water, then I opine we should be furnished with the reason why his sense of smell seems obliterated in him; for the only thing about him that at all answers to his nose is that identical spout-hole; and being



so clogged with two elements, it could not be expected to have the power of smelling. But owing to the mystery of the spout — whether it be water or whether it be vapor — no absolute certainty can as yet be arrived at on this head. Sure it is, nevertheless, that the Sperm Whale has no proper olfactories. But what does he want of them? No roses, no violets, no Cologne-water in the sea.

Furthermore, as his windpipe solely opens into the tube of his spouting canal, and as that long canal — like the grand Erie Canal — is furnished with a sort of locks (that open and shut) for the downward retention of air or the upward exclusion of water, therefore the whale has no voice; unless you insult him by saying, that when he so strangely rumbles, he talks through his nose. But then again, what has the whale to say? Seldom have I known any profound being that had anything to say to this world, unless forced to stammer out something by way of getting a living. Oh! happy that the world is such an excellent listener!

Now, the spouting canal of the Sperm Whale, chiefly intended as it is for the conveyance of air, and for several feet laid along, horizontally, just beneath the upper surface of his head, and a little to one side; this curious canal is very much like a gas-pipe laid down in a city on one side of a street. But the question returns whether this gas-pipe is also a water-pipe; in other words, whether the spout of the Sperm Whale is the mere vapor of the exhaled breath, or whether that exhaled breath is mixed with water taken in at the mouth, and discharged through the spiracle. It is certain that the mouth indirectly communicates with the spouting canal; but it cannot be proved that this is for the purpose of discharging water through the spiracle. Because the greatest necessity for so doing would seem to be,



when in feeding he accidentally takes in water. But the Sperm Whale's food is far beneath the surface, and there he cannot spout even if he would. Besides, if you regard him very closely, and time him with your watch, you will find that when unmolested, there is an undeviating rhyme between the periods of his jets and the ordinary periods of respiration.

But why pester one with all this reasoning on the subject? Speak out! You have seen him spout; then declare what the spout is; can you not tell water from air? My dear sir, in this world it is not so easy to settle these plain things. I have ever found your plain things the knottiest of all. And as for this whale spout, you might almost stand in it, and yet be undecided as to what it is precisely.

Still, we can hypothesize, even if we cannot prove and establish. My hypothesis is this: that the spout is nothing but mist.



## CHAPTER XLVI

### THE GRAND ARMADA

THE long and narrow peninsula of Malacca, extending south-eastward from the territories of Birmah, forms the most southerly point of all Asia. In a continuous line from that peninsula stretch the long islands of Sumatra, Java, Bally, and Timor; which, with many others, form a vast mole, or rampart, lengthwise, connecting Asia with Australia, and dividing the long unbroken Indian ocean from the thickly studded oriental archipelagoes. This rampart is pierced by several sally-ports for the convenience of ships and whales; conspicuous among which are the straits of Sunda and Malacca. By the straits of Sunda, chiefly, vessels bound to China from the west, emerge into the China seas.

With a fair, fresh wind, the *Pequod* was now drawing nigh to these straits; Ahab purposing to pass through them into the Javan sea, and thence, cruising northwards, over waters known to be frequented here and there by the Sperm Whale, sweep inshore by the Philippine Islands, and gain the far coast of Japan, in time for the great whaling season there. By these means, the circumnavigating *Pequod* would sweep almost all the known Sperm Whale cruising grounds of the world, previous to descending upon the Line in the Pacific; where Ahab, though everywhere else foiled in his pursuit, firmly counted upon giving battle to Moby Dick, in the sea he was most known to frequent;



and at a season when he might most reasonably be presumed to be haunting it.

But how now? in this zoned quest, does Ahab touch no land? does his crew drink air? Surely, he will stop for water. Nay. For a long time, now, the circus-running sun has raced within his fiery ring, and needs no sustenance but what's in himself. So Ahab. Mark this, too, in the whaler. While other hulls are loaded down with alien stuff, to be transferred to foreign wharves; the world-wandering whale-ship carries no cargo but herself and crew, their weapons and their wants. She has a whole lake's contents bottled in her ample hold. She is ballasted with utilities; not altogether with unusable pig-lead and kentledge. She carries years' water in her. Clear old prime Nantucket water; which, when three years afloat, the Nantucketer, in the Pacific, prefers to drink before the brackish fluid, but yesterday rafted off in casks, from the Peruvian or Indian streams. Hence it is, that, while other ships may have gone to China from New York, and back again, touching at a score of ports, the whale-ship, in all that interval, may not have sighted one grain of soil; her crew having seen no man but floating seamen like themselves. So that did you carry them the news that another flood had come; they would only answer — 'Well, boys, here's the ark!'

The ship had well nigh entered the straits, when the customary cheering cry was heard from aloft, and ere long a spectacle of singular magnificence saluted us. Broad on both bows, at the distance of some two or three miles, and forming a great semicircle, embracing one half of the level horizon, a continuous chain of whale-jets were up-playing and sparkling in the noon-day air.



Crowding all sail the *Pequod* pressed after them; the harpooners handling their weapons, and loudly cheering from the heads of their yet suspended boats. If the wind only held, little doubt had they, that chased through these Straits of Sunda, the vast host would only deploy into the Oriental seas to witness the capture of not a few of their number. And who could tell whether, in that congregated caravan, Moby Dick himself might not temporarily be swimming.

The *Pequod* at last shot by the vivid green Cockatoo Point on the Sumatra side, emerging at last upon the broad waters beyond. But still driving on in the wake of the whales, at length they seemed abating their speed; gradually the ship neared them; and the wind now dying away, word was passed to spring to the boats. But no sooner did the herd, by some presumed wonderful instinct of the Sperm Whale, become notified of the three keels that were after them, — though as yet a mile in their rear, — than they rallied again, and forming in close ranks and battalions, so that their spouts all looked like flashing lines of stacked bayonets, moved on with redoubled velocity.

Stripped to our shirts and drawers, we sprang to the white-ash, and after several hours' pulling were almost disposed to renounce the chase, when a general pausing commotion among the whales gave animating tokens that they were now at last under the influence of that strange perplexity of inert irresolution, which, when the fishermen perceive it in the whale, they say he is galled. In all directions expanding in vast irregular circles, and aimlessly swimming hither and thither, by their short thick spoutings, they plainly betrayed their distraction



of panic. This was still more strangely evinced by those of their number, who, completely paralyzed as it were, helplessly floated like water-logged dismantled ships on the sea.

Though many of the whales, as has been said, were in violent motion, yet it is to be observed that as a whole the herd neither advanced nor retreated, but collectively remained in one place. As is customary in those cases, the boats at once separated, each making for some one lone whale on the outskirts of the shoal. In about three minutes' time, Queequeg's harpoon was flung; the stricken fish darted blinding spray in our faces, and then running away with us like light, steered straight for the heart of the herd. Though such a movement on the part of the whale struck under such circumstances, is in no wise unprecedented; and indeed is almost always more or less anticipated; yet does it present one of the more perilous vicissitudes of the fishery. For as the swift monster drags you deeper and deeper into the frantic shoal, you bid adieu to circumspect life and only exist in a delirious throb.

As, blind and deaf, the whale plunged forward, as if by sheer power of speed to rid himself of the iron leech that had fastened to him; as we thus tore a white gash in the sea, on all sides menaced as we flew, by the crazed creatures to and fro rushing about us; our beset boat was like a ship mobbed by ice-isles in a tempest, and striving to steer through their complicated channels and straits, knowing not at what moment it may be locked in and crushed.

But not a bit daunted, Queequeg steered us manfully; now sheering off from this monster directly across our route in advance; now edging away from that, whose colossal flukes were suspended overhead, while all the



time, Starbuck stood up in the bows, lance in hand, pricking out of our way whatever whales he could reach by short darts, for there was no time to make long ones. Nor were the oarsmen quite idle, though their wonted duty was now altogether dispensed with. They chiefly attended to the shouting part of the business. 'Out of the way, Commodore!' cried one, to a great dromedary that of a sudden rose bodily to the surface, and for an instant threatened to swamp us. 'Hard down with your tail, there!' cried a second to another, which, close to our gunwale, seemed calmly cooling himself with his own fan-like extremity.

All whale-boats carry certain curious contrivances, originally invented by the Nantucket Indians, called druggs. Two thick squares of wood of equal size are stoutly clenched together, so that they cross each other's grain at right angles; a line of considerable length is then attached to the middle of this block, and the other end of the line being looped, it can in a moment be fastened to a harpoon. It is chiefly among galled whales that this drugg is used. For then, more whales are close round you than you can possibly chase at one time. But sperm whales are not every day encountered; while you may, then, you must kill all you can. And if you cannot kill them all at once, you must wing them, so that they can be afterwards killed at your leisure. Hence it is, that at times like these the drugg comes into requisition. Our boat was furnished with three of them. The first and second were successfully darted, and we saw the whales staggeringly running off, fettered by the enormous sidelong resistance of the towing drugg. They were cramped like malefactors with the chain and ball. But upon flinging the third, in the act of



tossing overboard the clumsy wooden block, it caught under one of the seats of the boat, and in an instant tore it out and carried it away, dropping the oarsman in the boat's bottom as the seat slid from under him. On both sides the sea came in at the wounded planks, but we stuffed two or three drawers and shirts in, and so stopped the leaks for the time.

It had been next to impossible to dart these drugged-harpoons, were it not that as we advanced into the herd, our whale's way greatly diminished; moreover, that as we went still further and further from the circumference of commotion, the direful disorders seemed waning. So that when at last the jerking harpoon drew out, and the towing whale sideways vanished; then, with the tapering force of his parting momentum, we glided between two whales into the innermost heart of the shoal, as if from some mountain torrent we had slid into a serene valley lake. Here the storms in the roaring glens between the outermost whales, were heard but not felt. In this central expanse the sea presented that smooth satin-like surface, called a sleek, produced by the subtle moisture thrown off by the whale in his more quiet moods. Owing to the density of the crowd of reposing whales, more immediately surrounding the embayed axis of the herd, no possible chance of escape was at present afforded us. We must watch for a breach in the living wall that hemmed us in; the wall that had only admitted us in order to shut us up. Keeping at the centre of the lake, we were occasionally visited by small tame cows and calves; the women and children of this routed host.

Now, inclusive of the occasional wide intervals between the revolving outer circles, and inclusive of the spaces



between the various pods in any one of those circles, the entire area at this juncture, embraced by the whole multitude, must have contained at least two or three square miles. At any rate — though indeed such a test at such a time might be deceptive — spoutings might be discovered from our low boat that seemed playing up almost from the rim of the horizon. I mention this circumstance, because, as if the cows and calves had been purposely locked up in this innermost fold; and as if the wide extent of the herd had hitherto prevented them from learning the precise cause of its stopping; or, possibly, being so young, unsophisticated, and every way innocent and inexperienced; however it may have been, these smaller whales — now and then visiting our becalmed boat from the margin of the lake — evinced a wondrous fearlessness and confidence, or else a still becharmed panic which it was impossible not to marvel at. Like household dogs they came snuffing round us, right up to our gunwales, and touching them: till it almost seemed that some spell had suddenly domesticated them. Queequeg patted their foreheads; Starbuck scratched their backs with his lance; but fearful of the consequences, for the time refrained from darting it.

But far beneath this wondrous world upon the surface, another and still stranger world met our eyes as we gazed over the side. For, suspended in those watery vaults, floated the forms of the nursing mothers of the whales. The lake, as I have hinted, was to a considerable depth exceedingly transparent; and as human infants while suckling will calmly and fixedly gaze away from the breast, as if leading two different lives at the time; and while yet drawing mortal nourishment, be still spiritually feasting upon some unearthly reminiscence; — even so did the



young of these whales seem looking up towards us, but not at us, as if we were but a bit of Gulf-weed in their new-born sight. Floating on their sides, the mothers also seemed quietly eyeing us. One of these little infants, hardly a day old, might have measured some fourteen feet in length, and some six feet in girth.

Meanwhile, as we thus lay entranced, the occasional sudden frantic spectacles in the distance evinced the activity of the other boats, still engaged in drugging the whales on the frontier of the host; or possibly carrying on the war within the first circle, where abundance of room and some convenient retreats were afforded them. But the sight of the enraged drugged whales now and then blindly darting to and fro across the circles, was nothing to what at last met our eyes. It is sometimes the custom when fast to a whale more than commonly powerful and alert, to seek to hamstring him, as it were, by sundering or maiming his gigantic tail-tendon. It is done by darting a short-handled cutting-spade, to which is attached a rope for hauling it back again. A whale wounded (as we afterwards learned) in this part, but not effectually, as it seemed, had broken away from the boat, carrying along with him half of the harpoon line; and in the extraordinary agony of the wound, he was now dashing among the revolving circles like the lone mounted desperado Arnold, at the battle of Saratoga, carrying dismay wherever he went.

But agonizing as was the wound of this whale, and an appalling spectacle enough, any way; yet the peculiar horror with which he seemed to inspire the rest of the herd, was owing to a cause which at first the intervening distance obscured from us. But at length we perceived that by one of the unimaginable accidents of the fishery, this whale had



become entangled in the harpoon-line that he towed; he had also run away with the cutting-spade in him; and while the free end of the rope attached to that weapon, had permanently caught in the coils of the harpoon-line round his tail, the cutting-spade itself had worked loose from his flesh. So that tormented to madness, he was now churning through the water, violently flailing with his flexible tail, and tossing the keen spade about him, wounding and murdering his own comrades.

This terrific object seemed to recall the whole herd from their stationary fright. First, the whales forming the margin of our lake began to crowd a little, and tumble against each other, as if lifted by half spent billows from afar; then the lake itself began faintly to heave and swell: in more and more contracting orbits the whales in the more central circles began to swim in thickening clusters. Yes, the long calm was departing. A low advancing hum was soon heard; and then like to the tumultuous masses of block-ice when the great river Hudson breaks up in Spring, the entire host of whales came tumbling upon their inner centre, as if to pile themselves up in one common mountain. Instantly Starbuck and Queequeg changed places; Starbuck taking the stern.

'Oars! Oars!' he intensely whispered, seizing the helm — 'gripe your oars, and clutch your souls, now! Men, stand by! Shove him off, you Queequeg — the whale there! — prick him! — hit him! Stand up — stand up, and stay so! Spring, men — pull, men; never mind their backs — scrape them! — scrape away!'

The boat was now all but jammed between two vast black bulks, leaving a narrow Dardanelles between their long lengths. But by desperate endeavor we at last shot





### CAPTURED

The dead whale in the foreground is marked by a 'waif,' or whaler's flag, which indicates to which of the two ships it belongs.



into a temporary opening; then giving way rapidly, and at the same time earnestly watching for another outlet. After many similar hair-breadth escapes, we at last swiftly glided into what had just been one of the outer circles, but now crossed by random whales, all violently making for one centre. This lucky salvation was cheaply purchased by the loss of Queequeg's hat, who, while standing in the bows to prick the fugitive whales, had his hat taken clean from his head by the air-eddy made by the sudden tossing of a pair of broad flukes close by.

Riotous and disordered as the universal commotion now was, it soon resolved itself into what seemed a systematic movement; for having clumped together at last in one dense body, they then renewed their onward flight with augmented fleetness. Further pursuit was useless; but the boats still lingered in their wake to pick up what drugged whales might be dropped astern, and likewise to secure one which Flask had killed and waived. The waif is a pennoned pole, two or three of which are carried by every boat; and which, when additional game is at hand, are inserted upright into the floating body of a dead whale, both to mark its place on the sea, and also as token of prior possession, should the boats of any other ship draw near.

The result of this lowering was somewhat illustrative of that sagacious saying in the Fishery, — the more whales the less fish. Of all the drugged whales only one was captured. The rest contrived to escape for the time, but only to be taken, as will hereafter be seen, by some other craft than the *Pequod*.



## CHAPTER XLVII

### THE PEQUOD MEETS THE ROSE-BUD

It was a week or two after the last whaling scene recounted, and when we were slowly sailing over a sleepy, vapory, mid-day sea, that the many noses on the *Pequod's* deck proved more vigilant discoverers than the three pairs of eyes aloft. A peculiar and not very pleasant smell was smelt in the sea.

'I will bet something now,' said Stubb, 'that somewhere hereabouts are some of those drugged whales we tickled the other day. I thought they would keel up before long.'

Presently, the vapors in advance slid aside; and there in the distance lay a ship, whose furled sails betokened that some sort of whale must be alongside. As we glided nearer, the stranger showed French colors from his peak; and by the eddying cloud of vulture sea-fowl that circled, and hovered, and swooped around him, it was plain that the whale alongside must be what the fishermen call a blasted whale, that is, a whale that has died unmolested on the sea, and so floated an unappropriated corpse. It may well be conceived, what an unsavory odor such a mass must exhale; worse than an Assyrian city in the plague, when the living are incompetent to bury the departed.

Coming still nearer with the expiring breeze, we saw that the Frenchman had a second whale alongside; and this second whale seemed even more of a nosegay than the first.



In truth, it turned out to be one of those problematical whales that seem to dry up and die with a sort of prodigious dyspepsia, or indigestion; leaving their defunct bodies almost entirely bankrupt of anything like oil. Nevertheless, in the proper place we shall see that no knowing fisherman will ever turn up his nose at such a whale as this, however much he may shun blasted whales in general.

The *Pequod* had now swept so nigh to the stranger, that Stubb vowed he recognised his cutting spade-pole entangled in the lines that were knotted round the tail of one of these whales.

‘There’s a pretty fellow, now,’ he banteringly laughed, standing in the ship’s bows, ‘there’s a jackal for ye! I well know that these Crappoes of Frenchmen are but poor devils in the fishery; sometimes lowering their boats for breakers, mistaking them for *Sperm Whale* spouts; yes, and sometimes sailing from their port with their hold full of boxes of tallow candles, and cases of snuffers, foreseeing that all the oil they will get won’t be enough to dip the Captain’s wick into; aye, we all know these things; but look ye, here’s a Crappo that is content with our leavings, the drugged whale there, I mean; aye, and is content too with scraping the dry bones of that other precious fish he has there. Poor devil! I say, pass round a hat, some one, and let’s make him a present of a little oil for dear charity’s sake. For what oil he’ll get from that drugged whale there, wouldn’t be fit to burn in a jail; no, not in a condemned cell. And as for the other whale, why, I’ll agree to get more oil by chopping up and trying out these three masts of ours, than he’ll get from that bundle of bones; though, now that I think of it, it may contain something worth a good deal more than oil; yes, amber-



gris. I wonder now if our old man has thought of that. It's worth trying. Yes, I'm in for it'; and so saying he started for the quarter-deck.

By this time the faint air had become a complete calm; so that whether or no, the *Pequod* was now fairly entrapped in the smell, with no hope of escaping except by its breezing up again. Issuing from the cabin, Stubb now called his boat's crew, and pulled off for the stranger. Drawing across her bow, he perceived that in accordance with the fanciful French taste, the upper part of her stempiece was carved in the likeness of a huge drooping stalk, was painted green, and for thorns had copper spikes projecting from it here and there; the whole terminating in a symmetrical folded bulb of a bright red color. Upon her head boards, in large gilt letters, he read '*Bouton de Rose*,' — Rose-button, or Rose-bud; and this was the romantic name of this aromatic ship.

Though Stubb did not understand the *Bouton* part of the inscription, yet the word *rose*, and the bulbous figure-head put together, sufficiently explained the whole to him.

'A wooden rose-bud, eh?' he cried with his hand to his nose, 'that will do very well; but how like all creation it smells!'

Now in order to hold direct communication with the people on deck, he had to pull round the bows to the star-board side, and thus come close to the blasted whale; and so talk over it.

Arrived then at this spot, with one hand still to his nose, he bawled — '*Bouton-de-Rose*, ahoy! are there any of you *Bouton-de-Roses* that speak English?'

'Yes,' rejoined a Guernsey-man from the bulwarks, who turned out to be the chief mate.



'Well, then, my Bouton-de-Rose-bud, have you seen the White Whale?'

'*What* whale?'

'The *White* Whale — a Sperm Whale — Moby Dick, have ye seen him?'

'Never heard of such a whale. Cachalot Blanche! White Whale — no.'

'Very good, then; good bye now, and I'll call again in a minute.'

Then rapidly pulling back towards the *Pequod*, and seeing Ahab leaning over the quarter-deck rail awaiting his report, he moulded his two hands into a trumpet and shouted — 'No, Sir! No!' upon which Ahab retired, and Stubb returned to the Frenchman.

He now perceived that the Guernsey-man, who just got into the chains, and was using a cutting-spade, had slung his nose in a sort of bag.

'What's the matter with your nose, there?' said Stubb. 'Broke it?'

'I wish it was broken, or that I didn't have any nose at all!' answered the Guernsey-man, who did not seem to relish the job he was at very much. 'But what are you holding *yours* for?'

'Oh, nothing! It's a wax nose; I have to hold it on. Fine day, ain't it? Air rather gardenny, I should say; throw us a bunch of posies, will ye, Bouton-de-Rose?'

'What in the devil's name do you want here?' roared the Guernsey-man, flying into a sudden passion.

'Oh! keep cool — cool? yes, that's the word; why don't you pack those whales in ice while you're working at 'em? But joking aside, though; do you know, Rose-bud,



that it's all nonsense trying to get any oil out of such whales? As for that dried up one, there, he hasn't a gill in his whole carcase.'

'I know that well enough; but, d'ye see, the Captain here won't believe it; this is his first voyage; he was a Cologne manufacturer before. But come aboard, and mayhap he'll believe you, if he won't me; and so I'll get out of this dirty scrape.'

'Anything to oblige ye, my sweet and pleasant fellow,' rejoined Stubb, and with that he soon mounted to the deck. There a queer scene presented itself. The sailors, in tasselled caps of red worsted, were getting the heavy tackles in readiness for the whales. But they worked rather slow and talked very fast, and seemed in anything but a good humor. All their noses upwardly projected from their faces like so many jib-booms. Now and then pairs of them would drop their work, and run up to the mast-head to get some fresh air. Some thinking they would catch the plague, dipped oakum in coal-tar, and at intervals held it to their nostrils. Others having broken the stems of their pipes almost short off at the bowl, were vigorously puffing tobacco-smoke, so that it constantly filled their olfactories.

Stubb was struck by a shower of outcries and anathemas proceeding from the Captain's roundhouse abaft; and looking in that direction saw a fiery face thrust from behind the door, which was held ajar from within. This was the tormented surgeon, who, after in vain remonstrating against the proceedings of the day, had betaken himself to the Captain's roundhouse (*cabinet* he called it) to avoid the pest; but still, could not help yelling out his entreaties and indignations at times.



Marking all this, Stubb argued well for his scheme, and turning to the Guernsey-man had a little chat with him, during which the stranger mate expressed his detestation of his Captain as a conceited ignoramus, who had brought them all into so unsavory and unprofitable a pickle. Sounding him carefully, Stubb further perceived that the Guernsey-man had not the slightest suspicion concerning the ambergris. He therefore held his peace on that head, but otherwise was quite frank and confidential with him, so that the two quickly concocted a little plan for both circumventing and satirizing the Captain, without his at all dreaming of distrusting their sincerity. According to this little plan of theirs, the Guernsey-man, under cover of an interpreter's office, was to tell the Captain what he pleased, but as coming from Stubb; and as for Stubb, he was to utter any nonsense that should come uppermost in him during the interview.

By this time their destined victim appeared from his cabin. He was a small and dark, but rather delicate looking man for a sea-captain, with large whiskers and moustache, however; and wore a red cotton velvet vest with watch-seals at his side. To this gentleman, Stubb was now politely introduced by the Guernsey-man, who at once ostentatiously put on the aspect of interpreting between them.

‘What shall I say to him first?’ said he.

‘Why,’ said Stubb, eyeing the velvet vest and the watch and seals, ‘you may as well begin by telling him that he looks a sort of babyish to me, though I don’t pretend to be a judge.’

‘He says, Monsieur,’ said the Guernsey-man, in French, turning to his captain, ‘that only yesterday his ship spoke



a vessel, whose captain and chief mate, with six sailors, had all died of a fever caught from a blasted whale they had brought alongside.'

Upon this the captain started, and eagerly desired to know more.

'What now?' said the Guernsey-man to Stubb.

'Why, since he takes it so easy, tell him that now I have eyed him carefully, I'm quite certain that he's no more fit to command a whale-ship than a St. Jago monkey. In fact, tell him from me he's a baboon.'

'He vows and declares, Monsieur, that the other whale, the dried one, is far more deadly than the blasted one; in fine, Monsieur, he conjures us, as we value our lives, to cut loose from these fish.'

Instantly the captain ran forward, and in a loud voice commanded his crew to desist from hoisting the cutting-tackles, and at once cast loose the cables and chains confining the whales to the ship.

'What now?' said the Guernsey-man, when the Captain had returned to them.

'Why, let me see; yes, you may as well tell him now that — that — in fact, tell him I've diddled him, and (aside to himself) perhaps somebody else.'

'He says, Monsieur, that he's very happy to have been of any service to us.'

Hearing this, the captain vowed that they were the grateful parties (meaning himself and mate) and concluded by inviting Stubb down into his cabin to drink a bottle of Bordeaux.

'He wants you to take a glass of wine with him,' said the interpreter.

'Thank him heartily; but tell him it's against my



principles to drink with the man I've diddled. In fact, tell him I must go.'

'He says, Monsieur, that his principles won't admit of his drinking; but that if Monsieur wants to live another day to drink, then Monsieur had best drop all four boats, and pull the ship away from these whales, for it's so calm they won't drift.'

By this time Stubb was over the side, and getting into his boat, hailed the Guernsey-man to this effect, — that having a long tow-line in his boat, he would do what he could to help them, by pulling out the lighter whale of the two from the ship's side. While the Frenchman's boats, then, were engaged in towing the ship one way, Stubb benevolently towed away at his whale the other way, ostentatiously slacking out a most unusually long tow-line.

Presently a breeze sprang up; Stubb feigned to cast off from the whale; hoisting his boats, the Frenchman soon increased his distance, while the *Pequod* slid in between him and Stubb's whale. Whereupon Stubb quickly pulled to the floating body, and hailing the *Pequod* to give notice of his intentions, at once proceeded to reap the fruit of his unrighteous cunning. Seizing his sharp boat-spade, he commenced an excavation in the body, a little behind the side fin. You would almost have thought he was digging a cellar there in the sea; and when at length his spade struck against the gaunt ribs, it was like turning up old Roman tiles and pottery buried in fat English loam. His boat's crew were all in high excitement, eagerly helping their chief, and looking as anxious as gold-hunters.

And all the time numberless fowls were diving, and ducking, and screaming, and yelling, and fighting around them. Stubb was beginning to look disappointed, espe-



cially as the horrible nosegay increased, when suddenly from out the very heart of this plague, there stole a faint stream of perfume, which flowed through the tide of bad smells without being absorbed by it, as one river will flow into and then along with another, without at all blending with it for a time.

‘I have it, I have it,’ cried Stubb, with delight, striking something in the subterranean regions, ‘a purse! a purse!’

Dropping his spade, he thrust both hands in, and drew out handfuls of something that looked like ripe Windsor soap, or rich mottled old cheese; very unctuous and savory withal. You might easily dent it with your thumb; it is of a hue between yellow and ash color. And this, good friends, is ambergris, worth a gold guinea an ounce to any druggist. Some six handfuls were obtained; but more was unavoidably lost in the sea, and still more, perhaps, might have been secured were it not for impatient Ahab’s loud command to Stubb to desist, and come on board, else the ship would bid them good-bye.

Now this ambergris is a very curious substance, and so important as an article of commerce, that in 1791 a certain Nantucket-born Captain Coffin was examined at the bar of the English House of Commons on that subject. For at that time, and indeed until a comparatively late day, the precise origin of ambergris remained, like amber itself, a problem to the learned. Though the word ambergris is but the French compound for grey amber, yet the two substances are quite distinct. For amber, though at times found on the seacoast, is also dug up in some far inland soils, whereas ambergris is never found except upon the sea. Besides, amber is a hard, transparent, brittle, odorless substance, used for mouth-pieces to pipes, for



beads and ornaments; but ambergris is soft, waxy, and so highly fragrant and spicy, that it is largely used in perfumery, in pastiles, precious candles, hair-powders, and pomatum. The Turks use it in cooking, and also carry it to Mecca, for the same purpose that frankincense is carried to St. Peter's in Rome. Some wine merchants drop a few grains into claret, to flavor it.

Who would think, then, that such fine ladies and gentlemen should regale themselves with an essence found in the inglorious bowels of a sick whale! Yet so it is. By some, ambergris is supposed to be the cause, and by others the effect, of the dyspepsia in the whale.

I have forgotten to say that there were found in this ambergris, certain hard, round, bony plates, which at first Stubb thought might be sailors' trowsers buttons; but it afterwards turned out that they were nothing more than pieces of small squid bones embalmed in that manner.



## CHAPTER XLVIII

### THE CASTAWAY

It was but some few days after encountering the Frenchman, that a most significant event befell the most insignificant of the *Pequod's* crew; an event most lamentable; and which ended in providing the sometimes madly merry and predestinated craft with a living and ever accompanying prophecy of whatever shattered sequel might prove her own.

Now, in the whale ship, it is not every one that goes in the boats. Some few hands are reserved called ship-keepers, whose province it is to work the vessel while the boats are pursuing the whale. As a general thing, these ship-keepers are as hardy fellows as the men comprising the boats' crews. But if there happen to be an unduly slender, clumsy, or timorous wight in the ship, that wight is certain to be made a ship-keeper. It was so in the *Pequod* with the little negro Pippin by nickname, Pip by abbreviation.

It came to pass, that in the ambergris affair Stubb's after-oarsman chanced so to sprain his hand, as for a time to become quite maimed; and, temporarily, Pip was put into his place.

The first time Stubb lowered with him, Pip evinced much nervousness; but happily, for that time, escaped close contact with the whale; and therefore came off not altogether discredibly; though Stubb observing him, took



care, afterwards, to exhort him to cherish his courageousness to the utmost, for he might often find it needful.

Now upon the second lowering, the boat paddled upon the whale; and as the fish received the darted iron, it gave its customary rap, which happened, in this instance, to be right under poor Pip's seat. The involuntary consternation of the moment caused him to leap, paddle in hand, out of the boat; and in such a way, that part of the slack whale line coming against his chest, he breasted it overboard with him, so as to become entangled in it, when at last plumping into the water. That instant the stricken whale started on a fierce run, the line swiftly straightened; and presto! poor Pip came all foaming up to the chocks of the boat, remorselessly dragged there by the line, which had taken several turns around his chest and neck.

Tashtego stood in the bows. He was full of the fire of the hunt. He hated Pip for a poltroon. Snatching the boat-knife from its sheath, he suspended its sharp edge over the line, and turning towards Stubb, exclaimed interrogatively, 'Cut?' Meantime Pip's blue, choked face plainly looked, Do. All passed in a flash. In less than half a minute, this entire thing happened.

'Cut!' roared Stubb; and so the whale was lost and Pip was saved.

So soon as he recovered himself, the poor little negro was assailed by yells and execrations from the crew. Tranquilly permitting these irregular cursings to evaporate, Stubb then in a plain, business-like, but still half humorous manner, cursed Pip officially; and that done, unofficially gave him much wholesome advice. The substance was, Never jump from a boat, Pip, except — but all the rest was indefinite, as the soundest advice ever is. Now, in general,



*Stick to the boat*, is your true motto in whaling; but cases will sometimes happen when *Leap from the boat*, is still better. Moreover, as if perceiving at last that if he should give undiluted conscientious advice to Pip, he would be leaving him too wide a margin to jump in for the future; Stubb suddenly dropped all advice, and concluded with a peremptory command, 'Stick to the boat, Pip, or I won't pick you up if you jump; mind that. We can't afford to lose whales by the likes of you; a whale would sell for thirty times what you would, Pip, in Alabama. Bear that in mind, and don't jump any more.' Hereby perhaps Stubb indirectly hinted, that though man loved his fellow, yet man is a money-making animal, which propensity too often interferes with his benevolence.

But we are all in the hands of the Gods; and Pip jumped again. It was under very similar circumstances to the first performance; but this time he did not breast out the line; and hence, when the whale started to run, Pip was left behind on the sea, like a hurried traveller's trunk. Alas! Stubb was but too true to his word. It was a beautiful, bounteous, blue day; the spangled sea calm and cool, and flatly stretching away, all round, to the horizon, like gold-beater's skin hammered out to the extremest. Bobbing up and down in that sea, Pip's ebon head showed like a head of cloves. No boat-knife was lifted when he fell so rapidly astern. Stubb's inexorable back was turned upon him; and the whale was winged. In three minutes, a whole mile of shoreless ocean was between Pip and Stubb. Out from the centre of the sea, poor Pip turned his crisp, curling, black head to the sun, another lonely castaway, though the loftiest and the brightest.



Now, in calm weather, to swim in the open ocean is as easy to the practised swimmer as to ride in a spring-carriage ashore. But the awful lonesomeness is intolerable. The intense concentration of self in the middle of a such heartless immensity, who can tell it? Mark, how when sailors in a dead calm bathe in the open sea — mark how closely they hug their ship and only coast along her sides.

But had Stubb really abandoned the poor little negro to his fate? No; he did not mean to, at least. Because there were two boats in his wake, and he supposed, no doubt, that they would of course come up to Pip very quickly, and pick him up; though, indeed, such considerations towards oarsmen jeopardized through their own timidity, is not always manifested by the hunters in all similar instances; and such instances not unfrequently occur; almost invariably in the fishery, a coward, so called, is marked with the same ruthless detestation peculiar to military navies and armies.

But it so happened, that those boats, without seeing Pip, suddenly spying whales close to them on one side, turned, and gave chase; and Stubb's boat was now so far away, and he and all his crew so intent upon his fish, that Pip's ringed horizon began to expand around him miserably. By the merest chance the ship itself at last rescued him; but from that hour the little negro went about the deck an idiot; such, at least, they said he was. The sea had jeeringly kept his finite body up, but drowned the infinite of his soul.

For the rest, blame not Stubb too hardly. The thing is common in that fishery; and in the sequel of the narrative, it will then be seen what like abandonment befell myself.



## CHAPTER XLIX

### PLUM PUDDING

THAT whale of Stubb's, so dearly purchased, was duly brought to the *Pequod's* side, where all those cutting and hoisting operations previously detailed, were regularly gone through, even to the baling of the Heidelburgh Tun, or Case.

While some were occupied with this latter duty, others were employed in dragging away the larger tubs, so soon as filled with the sperm; and when the proper time arrived, this same sperm was carefully manipulated ere going to the try-works, of which anon.

It had cooled and crystallized to such a degree, that when, with several others, I sat down before a large Constantine's bath of it, I found it strangely concreted into lumps, here and there rolling about in the liquid part. It was our business to squeeze these lumps back into fluid. A sweet and unctuous duty! No wonder that in old times sperm was such a favourite cosmetic. Such a clearer! such a sweetener! such a softener! such a delicious molli-fier! After having my hands in it for only a few minutes, my fingers felt like eels, and began, as it were, to serpentine and spiralize.

Now, while discoursing of sperm, it behooves to speak of other things akin to it, in the business of preparing the sperm whale for the try-works.



First comes white-horse, so called, which is obtained from the tapering part of the fish, and also from the thicker portions of his flukes. It is tough with congealed tendons — a wad of muscle — but still contains some oil. After being severed from the whale, the white-horse is first cut into portable oblongs ere going to the mincer. They look much like blocks of Berkshire marble.

Plum-pudding is the term bestowed upon certain fragmentary parts of the whale's flesh, here and there adhering to the blanket of blubber, and often participating to a considerable degree in its unctuousness. It is a most refreshing, convivial, beautiful object to behold. As its name imports, it is of an exceedingly rich, mottled tint, with a bestreaked snowy and golden ground, dotted with spots of the deepest crimson and purple. It is plums of rubies, in pictures of citron. Spite of reason, it is hard to keep yourself from eating it. I confess, that once I stole behind the foremast to try it. It tasted something as I should conceive a royal cutlet from the thigh of Louis le Gros might have tasted, supposing him to have been killed the first day after the venison season, and that particular venison season contemporary with an unusually fine vintage of the vineyards of Champagne.

There is another substance, and a very singular one, which turns up in the course of this business, but which I feel it to be very puzzling adequately to describe. It is called slobgollion; an appellation original with the whalemen, and even so is the nature of the substance. It is an ineffably oozy, stringy affair, most frequently found in the tubs of sperm, after a prolonged squeezing, and subsequent decanting. I hold it to be the wondrously thin, ruptured membranes of the case, coalescing.



Gurry, so called, is a term properly belonging to right whalemén, but sometimes incidentally used by the sperm fishermen. It designates the dark, glutinous substance which is scraped off the back of the Greenland or right whale, and much of which covers the decks of those inferior souls who hunt that ignoble Leviathan.

Nippers. Strictly this word is not indigenous to the whale's vocabulary. But as applied by whalemén, it becomes so. A whaleman's nipper is a short firm strip of tendinous stuff cut from the tapering part of Leviathan's tail: it averages an inch in thickness, and for the rest, is about the size of the iron part of a hoe. Edgewise moved along the oily deck, it operates like a leathern squilgee; and by nameless blandishments, as of magic, allures along with it all impurities.

But to learn all about these recondite matters, your best way is at once to descend into the blubber-room, and have a long talk with its inmates. This place has previously been mentioned as the receptacle for the blanket-pieces, when stript and hoisted from the whale. When the proper time arrives for cutting up its contents, this apartment is a scene of terror to all tyros, especially by night. On one side, lit by a dull lantern, a space has been left clear for the workmen. They generally go in pairs, — a pike-and-gaffman and a spade-man. The whaling-pike is similar to a frigate's boarding-weapon of the same name. The gaff is something like a boathook. With his gaff, the gaffman hooks on to a sheet of blubber, and strives to hold it from slipping, as the ship pitches and lurches about. Meanwhile, the spademan stands on the sheet itself, perpendicularly chopping it into the portable horse-pieces. This spade is sharp as hone can make it; the spademan's feet are shoe-



less; the thing he stands on will sometimes irresistibly slide away from him, like a sledge. If he cuts off one of his own toes, or one of his assistants', would you be very much astonished? Toes are scarce among veteran blubber-room men.



## CHAPTER L

### THE CASSOCK

HAD you stepped on board the *Pequod* at a certain juncture of this post-mortemizing of the whale; and had you strolled forward nigh the windlass, pretty sure am I that you would have scanned with no small curiosity a very strange, enigmatical object, which you would have seen there, lying along lengthwise in the lee scuppers. Not the wondrous cistern in the whale's huge head; not the prodigy of his unhinged lower jaw; not the miracle of his symmetrical tail; none of these would so surprise you, as half a glimpse of that unaccountable cone, — longer than a Kentuckian is tall, nigh a foot in diameter at the base, and jet-black as Yojo, the ebony idol of Queequeg. And an idol, indeed, it is; or, rather, in old times, its likeness was. Such an idol as that found in the secret groves of Queen Maachah in Judea; and for worshipping which, king Asa, her son, did depose her, and destroyed the idol, and burnt it for an abomination at the brook Kedron, as darkly set forth in the 15th chapter of the first book of Kings.

Look at the sailor, called the mincer, who now comes along, and assisted by two allies, heavily backs the grandissimus, as the mariners call it, and with bowed shoulders, staggers off with it as if he were a grenadier carrying a dead comrade from the field. Extending it upon the forecastle deck, he now proceeds cylindrically to remove its dark pelt, as an African hunter the pelt of a boa. This done he turns



the pelt inside out, like a pantaloon leg; gives it a good stretching, so as almost to double its diameter; and at last hangs it, well spread, in the rigging, to dry. Ere long, it is taken down; when removing some three feet of it, towards the pointed extremity, and then cutting two slits for arm-holes at the other end, he lengthwise slips himself bodily into it. The mincer now stands before you invested in the full canonicals of his calling. Immemorial to all his order, this investiture alone will adequately protect him, while employed in the peculiar functions of his office.

That office consists in mincing the horse-pieces of blubber for the pots; an operation which is conducted at a curious wooden horse, planted endwise against the bulwarks, and with a capacious tub beneath it, into which the minced pieces drop, fast as the sheets from a rapt orator's desk. Arrayed in decent black; occupying a conspicuous pulpit; intent on bible leaves; what a candidate for an archbishoprick, what a lad for a Pope were this mincer!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bible leaves! Bible leaves! This is the invariable cry from the mates to the mincer. It enjoins him to be careful, and cut his work into as thin slices as possible, inasmuch as by so doing the business of boiling out the oil is much accelerated, and its quantity considerably increased, besides perhaps improving it in quality.



## CHAPTER LI

### THE TRY-WORKS

BESIDES her hoisted boats, an American whaler is outwardly distinguished by her try-works. She presents the curious anomaly of the most solid masonry joining with oak and hemp in constituting the completed ship. It is as if from the open field a brick-kiln were transported to her planks.

The try-works are planted between the foremast and mainmast, the most roomy part of the deck. The timbers beneath are of a peculiar strength, fitted to sustain the weight of an almost solid mass of brick and mortar, some ten feet by eight square, and five in height. The foundation does not penetrate the deck, but the masonry is firmly secured to the surface by ponderous knees of iron bracing it on all sides, and screwing it down to the timbers. On the flanks it is cased with wood, and at top completely covered by a large, sloping, battened hatchway. Removing this hatch we expose the great try-pots, two in number, and each of several barrels' capacity. When not in use, they are kept remarkably clean. Sometimes they are polished with soapstone and sand, till they shine within like silver punch-bowls. During the night-watches some cynical old sailors will crawl into them and coil themselves away there for a nap. While employed in polishing them — one man in each pot, side by side — many confidential communications are carried on, over the iron lips. It is a



place also for profound mathematical meditation. It was in the left hand try-pot of the *Pequod*, with the soapstone diligently circling round me, that I was first indirectly struck by the remarkable fact, that in geometry all bodies



TRYING OUT THE BLUBBER

One of the men is dropping a piece into the pot.

gliding along the cycloid, my soapstone for example, will descend from any point in precisely the same time.

Removing the fire-board from the front of the try-works, the bare masonry of that side is exposed, penetrated by the two iron mouths of the furnaces, directly underneath the pots. These mouths are fitted with heavy doors of iron. The intense heat of the fire is prevented from communicating itself to the deck, by means of a shallow reservoir



extending under the entire inclosed surface of the works. By a tunnel inserted at the rear, this reservoir is kept replenished with water as fast as it evaporates. There are no external chimneys; they open direct from the rear wall. And here let us go back for a moment.

It was about nine o'clock at night that the *Pequod's* try-works were first started on this present voyage. It belonged to Stubb to oversee the business.

'All ready there? Off hatch, then, and start her. You cook, fire the works.' This was an easy thing, for the carpenter had been thrusting his shavings into the furnace throughout the passage. Here be it said that in a whaling voyage the first fire in the try-works has to be fed for a time with wood. After that no wood is used, except as a means of quick ignition to the staple fuel. In a word, after being tried out, the crisp, shrivelled blubber, now called scraps or fritters, still contains considerable of its unctuous properties. These fritters feed the flames. Like a plethoric burning martyr, or a self-consuming misanthrope, once ignited, the whale supplies his own fuel and burns by his own body. Would that he consumed his own smoke! for his smoke is horrible to inhale, and inhale it you must, and not only that, but you must live in it for the time. It has an unspeakable, wild, Hindoo odor about it, such as may lurk in the vicinity of funereal pyres. It smells like the left wing of the day of judgment; it is an argument for the pit.

By midnight the works were in full operation. We were clear from the carcase; sail had been made; the wind was freshening; the wild ocean darkness was intense. But that darkness was licked up by the fierce flames, which at intervals forked forth from the sooty flues, and illuminated





#### THE TRY-WORKS IN OPERATION

After the blubber is cut up, it is boiled on the upper decks in huge caldrons called the try-works.



every lofty rope in the rigging, as with the famed Greek fire. The burning ship drove on, as if remorselessly commissioned to some vengeful deed.

The hatch, removed from the top of the works, now afforded a wide hearth in front of them. Standing on this were the Tartarean shapes of the pagan harpooneers, always the whale-ship's stokers. With huge pronged poles they pitched hissing masses of blubber into the scalding pots, or stirred up the fires beneath, till the snaky flames darted, curling, out of the doors to catch them by the feet. The smoke rolled away in sullen heaps. To every pitch of the ship there was a pitch of the boiling oil, which seemed all eagerness to leap into their faces. Opposite the mouth of the works, on the further side of the wide wooden hearth, was the windlass. This served for a sea-sofa. Here lounged the watch, when not otherwise employed, looking into the red heat of the fire, till their eyes felt scorched in their heads. Their tawny features, now all begrimed with smoke and sweat, their matted beards, and the contrasting barbaric brilliancy of their teeth, all these were strangely revealed in the capricious emblazonings of the works. As they narrated to each other their unholy adventures, their tales of terror told in words of mirth; as their uncivilized laughter forked upwards out of them, like the flames from the furnace; as to and fro, in their front, the harpooneers wildly gesticulated with their huge pronged forks and dippers; the wind howled on, and the sea leaped, and the ship groaned and dived, and yet steadfastly shot her red hell further and further into the blackness of the sea and the night.



## CHAPTER LII

### STOWING DOWN AND CLEARING UP

ALREADY has it been related how the great leviathan is afar off descried from the mast-head ; how he is chased over the watery moors, and slaughtered in the valleys of the deep ; how he is then towed alongside and beheaded ; and how (on the principle which entitled the headsman of old to the garments in which the beheaded was killed) his great padded surtout becomes the property of his executioner ; how, in due time, he is condemned to the pots, and, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, his spermaceti, oil, and bone pass unscathed through the fire ; — but now it remains to conclude the last chapter of this part of the description by rehearsing — singing, if I may — the romantic proceeding of decanting off his oil into the casks and striking them down into the hold, where once again leviathan returns to his native profundities, sliding along beneath the surface as before ; but, alas ! never more to rise and blow.

While still warm, the oil, like hot punch, is received into the six-barrel casks ; and while, perhaps, the ship is pitching and rolling this way and that in the midnight sea, the enormous casks are slewed round and headed over, end for end, and sometimes perilously scoot across the slippery deck, like so many land slides, till at last man-handled and stayed in their course ; and all round the hoops, rap, rap, go as many hammers as



can play upon them, for now, *ex officio*, every sailor is a cooper.

At length, when the last pint is casked, and all is cool, then the great hatchways are unsealed, the bowels of the ship are thrown open, and down go the casks to their final rest in the sea. This done, the hatches are replaced, and hermetically closed, like a closet walled up.

In the sperm fishery, this is perhaps one of the most remarkable incidents in all the business of whaling. One day the planks stream with freshets of blood and oil; on the sacred quarter-deck enormous masses of the whale's head are profanely piled; great rusty casks lie about, as in a brewery yard; the smoke from the try-works has besooted all the bulwarks; the mariners go about suffused with unctuousness; the entire ship seems great leviathan himself; while on all hands the din is deafening.

But a day or two after, you look about you, and prick your ears in this self-same ship; and were it not for the tale-tell boats and try-works, you would all but swear you trod some silent merchant vessel, with a most scrupulously neat commander. The unmanufactured sperm oil possesses a singularly cleansing virtue. This is the reason why the decks never look so white as just after what they call an affair of oil. Besides, from the ashes of the burned scraps of the whale, a potent lye is readily made; and whenever any adhesiveness from the back of the whale remains clinging to the side, that lye quickly exterminates it. Hands go diligently along the bulwarks, and with buckets of water and rags restore them to their full tidiness. The soot is brushed from the lower rigging. All the numerous implements which have been in use are likewise faithfully cleansed and put away. The great hatch is



scrubbed and placed upon the try-works, completely hiding the pots; every cask is out of sight; all tackles are coiled in unseen nooks; and when by the combined and simultaneous industry of almost the entire ship's company, the whole of this conscientious duty is at last concluded, then the crew themselves proceed to their own ablutions; shift themselves from top to toe; and finally issue to the immaculate deck, fresh and all aglow, as bridegrooms new-leaped from out the daintiest Holland.

But mark: aloft there, at the three mast heads, stand three men intent on spying out more whales, which, if caught, infallibly will again soil the old oaken furniture, and drop at least one small grease spot somewhere. Yes; and many is the time, when, after the severest uninterrupted labors, which know no night; continuing straight through for ninety-six hours; when from the boat, where they have swelled their wrists with all day rowing on the Line, — they only step to the deck to carry vast chains, and heave the heavy windlass, and cut and slash, yea, and in their very sweatings to be smoked and burned anew by the combined fires of the equatorial sun and the equatorial try-works; when, on the heel of all this, they have finally bestirred themselves to cleanse the ship, and make a spotless dairy room of it; many is the time the poor fellows, just buttoning the necks of their clean frocks, are startled by the cry of 'There she blows!' and away they fly to fight another whale, and go through the whole weary thing again.



## CHAPTER LIII

### LEG AND ARM

THE *PEQUOD*, OF NANTUCKET, MEETS THE *SAMUEL  
ENDERBY*, OF LONDON

‘SHIP, ahoy! Hast seen the White Whale?’

So cried Ahab, once more hailing a ship showing English colors, bearing down under the stern. Trumpet to mouth, the old man was standing in his hoisted quarter-boat, his ivory leg plainly revealed to the stranger captain, who was carelessly reclining in his own boat’s bow. He was a darkly-tanned, burly, good-natured, fine-looking man, of sixty or thereabouts, dressed in a spacious roundabout, that hung round him in festoons of blue pilot-cloth; and one empty arm of this jacket streamed behind him like the brodered arm of a huzzar’s surcoat.

‘Hast seen the White Whale?’

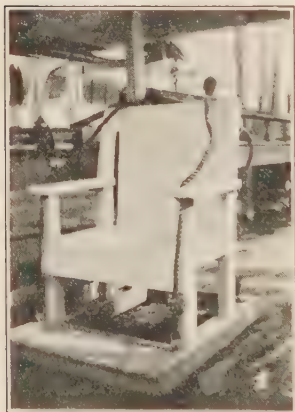
‘See you this?’ and withdrawing it from the folds that had hidden it, he held up a white arm of sperm whale bone, terminating in a wooden head like a mallet.

‘Man my boat!’ cried Ahab, impetuously, and tossing about the oars near him — ‘Stand by to lower!’

In less than a minute, without quitting his little craft, he and his crew were dropped to the water, and were soon alongside of the stranger. But here a curious difficulty presented itself. In the excitement of the moment, Ahab had forgotten that since the loss of his leg he had never once



stepped on board of any vessel at sea but his own, and then it was always by an ingenious and very handy mechanical contrivance peculiar to the *Pequod*, and a thing not to be rigged and shipped in any other vessel at a moment's warning. Now, it is no very easy matter for anybody —



THE 'OLD LADY'S CHAIR' ON  
THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

Whenever the captain's wife accompanied him on a voyage, she boarded and left the ship by means of this chair.

except those who are almost hourly used to it, like whale men — to clamber up a ship's side from a boat on the open sea; for the great swells now lift the boat high up towards the bulwarks, and then instantaneously drop it half way down to the keelson. So, deprived of one leg, and the strange ship of course being altogether unsupplied with the kindly invention, Ahab now found himself abjectly reduced to a clumsy landsman again; hopelessly eyeing the uncertain changeful height he could hardly hope to attain.

It has before been hinted, perhaps, that every little untoward circumstance that befell him, and which indirectly sprang from his luckless mishap, almost invariably irritated or exasperated Ahab. And in the present instance, all this was heightened by the sight of the two officers of the strange ship, leaning over the side, by the perpendicular ladder of nailed cleats there, and swinging towards him a pair of tastefully



ornamented man-ropes; for at first they did not seem to bethink them that a one-legged man must be too much of a cripple to use their sea bannisters. But this awkwardness only lasted a minute, because the strange captain, observing at a glance how affairs stood, cried out, 'I see, I see! — avast heaving there! Jump, boys, and swing over the cutting-tackle.'

As good luck would have it, they had had a whale alongside a day or two previous, and the great tackles were still aloft, and the massive curved blubber-hook, now clean and dry, was still attached to the end. This was quickly lowered to Ahab, who at once comprehending it all, slid his solitary thigh into the curve of the hook (it was like sitting in the fluke of an anchor, or the crotch of an apple tree), and then giving the word, held himself fast, and at the same time also helped to hoist his own weight, by pulling hand-over-hand upon one of the running parts of the tackle. Soon he was carefully swung inside the high bulwarks, and gently landed upon the capstan head. With his ivory arm frankly thrust forth in welcome, the other captain advanced, and Ahab, putting out his ivory leg, and crossing the ivory arm (like two sword-fish blades) cried out in his walrus way, 'Aye, aye, hearty! let us shake bones together! — an arm and a leg! — an arm that never can shrink, d'ye see; and a leg that never can run. Where did'st thou see the White Whale? — how long ago?'

'The White Whale,' said the Englishman, pointing his ivory arm towards the East, and taking a rueful sight along it, as if it had been a telescope; 'there I saw him, on the Line, last season.'

'And he took that arm off, did he?' asked Ahab, now



sliding down from the capstan, and resting on the Englishman's shoulder, as he did so.

'Aye, he was the cause of it, at least ; and that leg, too ?'

'Spin me the yarn,' said Ahab ; 'how was it ?'

'It was the first time in my life that I ever cruised on the Line,' began the Englishman. 'I was ignorant of the White Whale at that time. Well, one day we lowered for a pod of four or five whales, and my boat fastened to one of them ; a regular circus horse he was, too, that went milling and milling round so, that my boat's crew could only trim dish, by sitting all their sterns on the outer gunwale. Presently up breaches from the bottom of the sea a bouncing great whale, with a milky-white head and hump, all crows' feet and wrinkles.'

'It was he, it was he !' cried Ahab, suddenly letting out his suspended breath.

'And harpoons sticking in near his starboard fin.'

'Aye, aye — they were mine — *my* irons,' cried Ahab, exultingly — 'but on !'

'Give me a chance, then,' said the Englishman, good-humoredly. 'Well, this old great-grandfather, with the white head and hump, runs all afoam into the pod, and goes to snapping furiously at my fast-line.'

'Aye, I see ! — wanted to part it ; free the fast-fish — an old trick — I know him.'

'How it was exactly,' continued the one-armed commander, 'I do not know ; but in biting the line, it got foul of his teeth, caught there somehow ; but we didn't know it then ; so that when we afterwards pulled on the line, bounce we came plump on to his hump ! instead of the other whale's that went off to windward, all fluking. Seeing how matters stood, and what a noble great whale it



was — the noblest and biggest I ever saw, sir, in my life — I resolved to capture him, spite of the boiling rage he seemed to be in. And thinking the hap-hazard line would get loose, or the tooth it was tangled to might draw (for I have a devil of a boat's crew for a pull on a whale-line); seeing all this, I say, I jumped into my first mate's boat — Mr. Mounttop's here (by the way, Captain — Mounttop; Mounttop — the captain); — as I was saying, I jumped into Mounttop's boat, which, d'ye see, was gunwale and gunwale with mine, then; and snatching the first harpoon, let this old great-grandfather have it. But, Lord, look you, sir — hearts and souls alive, man — the next instant, in a jiff, I was blind as a bat — both eyes out — all befogged and bedeadened with black foam — the whale's tail looming straight up out of it, perpendicular in the air, like a marble steeple. No use sterner all, then; but as I was groping at midday, with a blinding sun, all crown-jewels; as I was groping, I say, after the second iron, to toss it overboard — down comes the tail like a Lima tower, cutting my boat in two, leaving each half in splinters; and, flukes first, the white hump backed through the wreck, as though it was all chips. We all struck out. To escape his terrible flailings, I seized hold of my harpoon-pole sticking in him, and for a moment clung to that like a sucking fish. But a combing sea dashed me off, and at the same instant, the fish, taking one good dart forwards, went down like a flash; and the barb of that cursed second iron towing along near me caught me here' (clapping his hand just below his shoulder); 'yes, caught me just here, I say, and bore me down to Hell's flames, I was thinking; when, all of a sudden, thank the good God, the barb ript its way along the flesh — clear along the whole length of my



arm — came out nigh my wrist, and up I floated; — and that gentleman there will tell you the rest (by the way, captain — Dr. Bunger, ship's surgeon: Bunger, my lad, — the captain). Now, Bunger boy, spin your part of the yarn.'

The professional gentleman thus familiarly pointed out, had been all the time standing near them, with nothing specific visible, to denote his gentlemanly rank on board. His face was an exceedingly round but sober one; he was dressed in a faded blue woollen frock or shirt, and patched trowsers; and had thus far been dividing his attention between a marlingspike he held in one hand, and a pill-box held in the other, occasionally casting a critical glance at the ivory limbs of the two crippled captains. But, at his superior's introduction of him to Ahab, he politely bowed, and straightway went on to do his captain's bidding.

'It was a shocking bad wound,' began the whale-surgeon; 'and, taking my advice, Captain Boomer here, stood our old *Sammy* —'

'*Samuel Enderby* is the name of my ship,' interrupted the one-armed captain, addressing Ahab; 'go on, boy.'

'Stood our old *Sammy* off to the northward, to get out of the blazing hot weather there on the Line. But it was no use — I did all I could; sat up with him nights; was very severe with him in the matter of diet —'

'Oh, very severe!' chimed in the patient himself; then suddenly altering his voice, 'Drinking hot rum toddies with me every night, till he couldn't see to put on the bandages; and sending me to bed, half seas over, about three o'clock in the morning. Oh, ye stars! he sat up with me indeed, and was very severe in my diet. Oh! a great watcher, and very dietetically severe, is Dr. Bunger.



(Bunger, you dog, laugh out! why don't ye? You know you're a precious jolly rascal.) But, heave ahead, boy, I'd rather be killed by you than kept alive by any other man.'

'My captain, you must have ere this perceived, respected sir' — said the imperturbable godly-looking Bunger, slightly bowing to Ahab — 'is apt to be facetious at times; he spins us many clever things of that sort. But I may as well say — *en passant*, as the French remark — that I myself — that is to say, Jack Bunger, late of the reverend clergy — am a strict total abstinence man; I never drink —'

'Water!' cried the captain; 'he never drinks it; it's a sort of fits to him; fresh water throws him into the hydrophobia; but go on — go on with the arm story.'

'Yes, I may as well,' said the surgeon, coolly. 'I was about observing, sir, before Captain Boomer's facetious interruption, that spite of my best and severest endeavors, the wound kept getting worse and worse; the truth was, sir, it was as ugly gaping wound as surgeon ever saw; more than two feet and several inches long. I measured it with the lead line. In short, it grew black; I knew what was threatened, and off it came. But I had no hand in shipping that ivory arm there; that thing is against all rule' — pointing at it with the marlingspike — 'that is the captain's work, not mine; he ordered the carpenter to make it; he had that club-hammer there put to the end, to knock some one's brains out with, I suppose, as he tried mine once. He flies into diabolical passions sometimes. Do ye see this dent, sir' — removing his hat, and brushing aside his hair, and exposing a bowl-like cavity in his skull, but which bore not the slightest scarry trace, or any token of ever



having been a wound — ‘Well, the captain there will tell you how that came here; he knows.’

‘No, I don’t,’ said the captain, ‘but his mother did; he was born with it. Oh, you solemn rogue, you — you Bunger! was there ever such another Bunger in the watery world? Bunger, when you die, you ought to die in pickle, you dog; you should be preserved to future ages, you rascal.’

‘What became of the White Whale?’ now cried Ahab, who thus far had been impatiently listening to this bye-play between the two Englishmen.

‘Oh!’ cried the one-armed captain, ‘oh, yes! Well; after he sounded, we didn’t see him again for some time; in fact, as I before hinted, I didn’t then know what whale it was that had served me such a trick, till some time afterwards, when coming back to the Line, we heard about Moby Dick — as some call him — and then I knew it was he.’

‘Did’st thou cross his wake again?’

‘Twice.’

‘But could not fasten?’

‘Didn’t want to try to: ain’t one limb enough? What should I do without this other arm? And I’m thinking Moby Dick doesn’t bite so much as he swallows.’

‘Well, then,’ interrupted Bunger, ‘give him your left arm for bait to get the right. Do you know, gentlemen’ — very gravely and mathematically bowing to each Captain in succession — ‘Do you know, gentlemen, that the digestive organs of the whale are so inscrutably constructed by Divine Providence, that it is quite impossible for him to completely digest even a man’s arm? And he knows it too. So that what you take for the White Whale’s malice



is only his awkwardness. For he never means to swallow a single limb; he only thinks to terrify by feints. But sometimes he is like the old juggling fellow, formerly a patient of mine in Ceylon, that making believe swallow jack-knives, once upon a time let one drop into him in good earnest, and there it stayed for a twelvemonth or more; when I gave him an emetic, and he heaved it up in small tacks, d'ye see. No possible way for him to digest that jack-knife, and fully incorporate it into his general bodily system. Yes, Captain Boomer, if you are quick enough about it, and have a mind to pawn one arm for the sake of the privilege of giving decent burial to the other, why in that case the arm is yours; only let the whale have another chance at you shortly, that's all.'

'No, thank ye, Bunker,' said the English Captain, 'he's welcome to the arm he has, since I can't help it, and didn't know him then; but not to another one. No more White Whales for me; I've lowered for him once, and that has satisfied me. There would be great glory in killing him, I know that; and there is a ship-load of precious sperm in him, but, hark ye, he's best let alone; don't you think so, Captain?' — glancing at the ivory leg.

'He is. But he will still be hunted, for all that. What is best let alone, that accursed thing is not always what least allures. He's all a magnet! How long since thou saw'st him last? Which way heading?'

'Bless my soul, and curse the foul fiend's,' cried Bunker, stoopingly walking round Ahab, and like a dog, strangely snuffing; 'this man's blood — bring the thermometer! — it's at the boiling point! — his pulse makes these planks beat! — sir!' — taking a lancet from his pocket, and drawing near to Ahab's arm.



‘Avast!’ roared Ahab, dashing him against the bulwarks — ‘Man the boat! Which way heading?’

‘What’s the matter?’ cried the English captain. ‘He was heading east, I think. — Is your Captain crazy?’ whispering Fedallah.

But Fedallah, putting a finger on his lip, slid over the bulwarks to take the boat’s steering oar, and Ahab, swinging the cutting-tackle towards him, commanded the ship’s sailors to stand by to lower.

In a moment he was standing in the boat’s stern, and the Manilla men were springing to their oars. In vain the English Captain hailed him. With back to the stranger ship, and face set like a flint to his own, Ahab stood upright till alongside of the *Pequod*.



## CHAPTER LIV

### AHAB'S LEG

THE precipitating manner in which Captain Ahab had quitted the *Samuel Enderby* of London, had not been unattended with some small violence to his own person. He had lighted with such energy upon a thwart of his boat that his ivory leg had received a half-splintering shock. And when after gaining his own deck, and his own pivot-hole there, he so vehemently wheeled round with an urgent command to the steersman (it was, as ever, something about his not steering inflexibly enough); then, the already shaken ivory received such an additional twist and wrench, that though it still remained entire, and to all appearances lusty, yet Ahab did not deem it entirely trustworthy.

And, indeed, it seemed small matter for wonder, that for all his pervading, mad recklessness, Ahab did at times give careful heed to the condition of that dead bone upon which he partly stood. For it had not been very long prior to the *Pequod's* sailing from Nantucket, that he had been found one night lying prone upon the ground, and insensible; by some unknown, and seemingly inexplicable, unimaginable casualty, his ivory limb having been so violently displaced, that it had stake-wise smitten, and all but pierced his groin; nor was it without extreme difficulty that the agonizing wound was entirely cured.

Unwittingly here a secret has been divulged, which perhaps might more properly, in set way, have been disclosed



before. With many other particulars concerning Ahab, always had it remained a mystery to some, why it was, that for a certain period, both before and after the sailing of the *Pequod*, he had hidden himself away with such Grand-Lama-like exclusiveness; and, for that one interval, sought speechless refuge, as it were, among the marble senate of the dead. Captain Peleg's bruited reason for this thing appeared by no means adequate: though, indeed, as touching all Ahab's deeper part, every revelation partook more of significant darkness than of explanatory light. But, in the end, it all came out; this one matter did, at least. That direful mishap was at the bottom of his temporary recluse-ness. And not only this, but to that ever-contracting, dropping circle ashore, who, for any reason, possessed the privilege of a less banned approach to him; to that timid circle the above hinted casualty — remaining, as it did, moodily unaccounted for by Ahab — invested itself with terrors, not entirely underived from the land of spirits and of wails. So that, through their zeal for him, they had all conspired, so far as in them lay, to muffle up the knowledge of this thing from others; and hence it was, that not till a considerable interval had elapsed, did it transpire upon the *Pequod's* decks.

But be all this as it may; let the unseen, ambiguous synod in the air, or the vindictive princes and potentates of fire, have to do or not with earthly Ahab, yet, in this present matter of his leg, he took plain practical procedures; — he called the carpenter.

And when that functionary appeared before him, he bade him without delay set about making a new leg, and directed the mates to see him supplied with all the studs and joists of jaw-ivory (Sperm Whale) which had thus



far been accumulated on the voyage, in order that a careful selection of the stoutest, clearest-grained stuff might be secured. This done, the carpenter received orders to have the leg completed that night; and to provide all the fittings for it, independent of those pertaining to the distrusted one in use. Moreover, the ship's forge was ordered to be hoisted out of its temporary idleness in the hold; and, to accelerate the affair, the blacksmith was commanded to proceed at once to the forging of whatever iron contrivances might be needed.



## CHAPTER LV

### AHAB AND STARBUCK IN THE CABIN

ACCORDING to usage they were pumping the ship next morning; and lo! no inconsiderable oil came up with the water; the casks below must have sprung a bad leak. Much concern was shown; and Starbuck went down into the cabin to report this unfavorable affair.<sup>1</sup>

Now, from the South and West the *Pequod* was drawing nigh to Formosa and the Bashee Isles, between which lies one of the tropical outlets from the China waters into the Pacific. And so Starbuck found Ahab with a general chart of the oriental archipelagoes spread before him; and another separate one representing the long eastern coasts of the Japanese islands — Nippon, Matsmai, and Sikoke. With his snow-white new ivory leg braced against the screwed leg of his table, and with a long pruning-hook of a jack-knife in his hand, the wondrous old man, with his back to the gangway door, was wrinkling his brow, and tracing his old courses again.

‘Who’s there?’ hearing the footstep at the door, but not turning round to it. ‘On deck! Begone!’

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<sup>1</sup> In Sperm whalemens with any considerable quantity of oil on board, it is a regular semi weekly duty to conduct a hose into the hold, and drench the casks with sea water; which afterwards, at varying intervals, is removed by the ship’s pumps. Hereby the casks are sought to be kept damply tight; while by the changed character of the withdrawn water, the mariners readily detect any serious leakage in the precious cargo.



‘Captain Ahab mistakes; it is I. The oil in the hold is leaking, sir. We must up Burtons and break out.’

‘Up Burtons and break out? Now that we are nearing Japan; heave-to here for a week to tinker a parcel of old hoops?’

‘Either do that, sir, or waste in one day more oil than we may make good in a year. What we come twenty thousand miles to get is worth saving, sir.’

‘So it is, so it is; if we get it.’

‘I was speaking of the oil in the hold, sir.’

‘And I was not speaking or thinking of that at all. Begone! Let it leak! I’m all aleak myself. Aye! leaks in leaks! not only full of leaky casks, but those leaky casks are in a leaky ship; and that’s a far worse plight than the *Pequod’s*, man. Yet I don’t stop to plug my leak; for who can find it in the deep-loaded hull; or how hope to plug it, even if found, in this life’s howling gale? Starbuck! I’ll not have the Burtons hoisted.’

‘What will the owners say, sir?’

‘Let the owners stand on Nantucket beach and outyell the Typhoons. What cares Ahab? Owners, owners? Thou art always prating to me, Starbuck, about those miserly owners, as if the owners were my conscience. But look ye, the only real owner of anything is its commander; and hark ye, my conscience is in this ship’s keel. — On deck!’

‘Captain Ahab,’ said the reddening mate, moving further into the cabin, with a daring so strangely respectful and cautious that it almost seemed not only every way seeking to avoid the slightest outward manifestation of itself, but within also seemed more than half distrustful of itself; ‘A better man than I might well pass over in thee what he



would quickly enough resent in a younger man; aye, and in a happier, Captain Ahab.'

'Devils! Dost thou then so much as dare to critically think of me? — On deck!'

'Nay, sir, not yet; I do entreat. And I do dare, sir — to be forbearing! Shall we not understand each other better than hitherto, Captain Ahab?'

Ahab seized a loaded musket from the rack (forming part of most South-Sea-men's cabin furniture), and pointing it towards Starbuck, exclaimed: 'There is one God that is Lord over the earth, and one Captain that is lord over the *Pequod*. — On deck!'

For an instant in the flashing eyes of the mate, and his fiery cheeks, you would have almost thought that he had really received the blaze of the levelled tube. But, mastering his emotion, he half calmly rose, and as he quitted the cabin, paused for an instant and said: 'Thou hast outraged, not insulted me, sir; but for that I ask thee not to beware of Starbuck; thou wouldst but laugh; but let Ahab beware of Ahab; beware of thyself, old man.'

'He waxes brave, but nevertheless obeys; most careful bravery that!' murmured Ahab, as Starbuck disappeared. 'What's that he said — Ahab beware of Ahab — there's something there!' Then unconsciously using the musket for a staff, with an iron brow he paced to and fro in the little cabin; but presently the thick plaits of his forehead relaxed, and returning the gun to the rack, he went to the deck.

'Thou art but too good a fellow, Starbuck,' he said lowly to the mate; then raising his voice to the crew: 'Furl the t' gallant-sails, and close-reef the top-sails, fore



and aft ; back the main-yard ; up Burtons, and break out in the main-hold.'

It was perhaps vain to surmise exactly why it was, that as respecting Starbuck, Ahab thus acted. It may have been a flash of honesty in him ; or mere prudential policy which, under the circumstance, imperiously forbade the slightest symptom of open disaffection, however transient, in the important chief officer of his ship. However it was, his orders were executed ; and the Burtons were hoisted.



## CHAPTER LVI

### QUEEQUEG IN HIS COFFIN

UPON searching, it was found that the casks last struck into the hold were perfectly sound, and that the leak must be further off. So, it being calm weather, they broke out deeper and deeper, disturbing the slumbers of the huge ground-tier butts: and from that black midnight sending those gigantic moles into the daylight above. So deep did they go: and so ancient, and corroded, and weedy the aspect of the lowermost puncheons, that you almost looked next for some moldy corner-stone cask containing coins of Captain Noah, with copies of the posted placards, vainly warning the infatuated old world from the flood. Tierce after tierce, too, of water, and bread, and beef, and shooks of staves, and iron bundles of hoops, were hoisted out, till at last the piled decks were hard to get about; and the hollow hull echoed under foot, as if you were treading over empty catacombs, and reeled and rolled in the sea like an air-freighted demijohn. Top-heavy was the ship as a dinnerless student with all Aristotle in his head. Well was it that the Typhoons did not visit them then.

Now, at this time it was that my poor pagan companion, and fast bosom-friend, Queequeg, was seized with a fever, which brought him nigh to his endless end.

Be it said, that in this vocation of whaling, sinecures are unknown; dignity and danger go hand in hand; till you get to be Captain, the higher you rise the harder you toil.



So with poor Queequeg, who, as harpooneer, must not only face all the rage of the living whale, but — as we have elsewhere seen — mount his dead back in a rolling sea; and finally descend into the gloom of the hold, and bitterly sweating all day in that subterraneous confinement, resolutely manhandle the clumsiest casks and see to their stowage. To be short, among whalemén, the harpooneers are the holders, so called.

Poor Queequeg! when the ship was about half disembowelled, you should have stooped over the hatchway, and peered down upon him there; where, stripped to his woollen drawers, the tattooed savage was crawling about amid that dampness and slime, like a green spotted lizard at the bottom of a well. And a well, or an ice-house, it somehow proved to him, poor pagan; where, strange to say, for all the heat of his sweatings, he caught a terrible chill which lapsed into a fever; and at last, after some days' suffering, laid him in his hammock, close to the very sill of the door of death. How he wasted and wasted away in those long-lingering days, till there seemed but little left of him but his frame and tattooing.

Not a man of the crew but gave him up; and, as for Queequeg himself, what he thought of his case was forcibly shown by a curious favor he asked. He called one to him in the grey morning watch, when the day was just breaking, and taking his hand, said that while in Nantucket he had chanced to see certain little canoes of dark wood, like the rich war-wood of his native isle; and upon inquiry, he had learned that all whalemén who died in Nantucket, were laid in those same dark canoes, and that the fancy of being so laid had much pleased him; for it was not unlike the custom of his own race, who, after embalming a dead warrior,



stretched him out in his canoe, and so left him to be floated away to the starry archipelagoes; for not only do they believe that the stars are isles, but that far beyond all visible horizons, their own mild, uncontinented seas, interflow with the blue heavens; and so form the white breakers of the milky way. He added, that he shuddered at the thought of being buried in his hammock, according to the usual sea-custom, tossed like something vile to the death-devouring sharks. No: he desired a canoe like those of Nantucket, all the more congenial to him, being a whale-man, that like a whale-boat these coffin-canoes were without a keel; though that involved but uncertain steering, and much lee-way adown the dim ages.

Now, when this strange circumstance was made known aft, the carpenter was at once commanded to do Queequeg's bidding, whatever it might include. There was some heathenish, coffin-colored old lumber aboard, which, upon a long previous voyage, had been cut from the aboriginal groves of the Lackaday islands, and from these dark planks the coffin was recommended to be made. No sooner was the carpenter apprised of the order, than taking his rule, he forthwith with all the indifferent promptitude of his character, proceeded into the fore-castle and took Queequeg's measure with great accuracy, regularly chalking Queequeg's person as he shifted the rule.

'Ah! poor fellow! he'll have to die now,' ejaculated the Long Island sailor.

Going to his vice-bench, the carpenter for convenience sake and general reference, now transferringly measured on it the exact length the coffin was to be, and then made the transfer permanent by cutting two notches at its extrem-



ities. This done, he marshalled the planks and his tools, and to work.

When the last nail was driven, and the lid duly planed and fitted, he lightly shouldered the coffin and went forward with it, inquiring whether they were ready for it yet in that direction.

Overhearing the indignant but half-humorous cries with which the people on deck began to drive the coffin away, Queequeg, to every one's consternation, commanded that the thing should be instantly brought to him, nor was there any denying him; seeing that, of all mortals, some dying men are the most tyrannical; and certainly, since they will shortly trouble us so little for evermore, the poor fellows ought to be indulged.

Leaning over in his hammock, Queequeg long regarded the coffin with an attentive eye. He then called for his harpoon, had the wooden stock drawn from it, and then had the iron part placed in the coffin along with one of the paddles of his boat. All by his own request, also, biscuits were then ranged round the sides within: a flask of fresh water was placed at the head, and a small bag of woody earth scraped up in the hold at the foot; and a piece of sail-cloth being rolled up for a pillow, Queequeg now entreated to be lifted into his final bed, that he might make trial of its comforts, if any it had. He lay without moving a few minutes, then told one to go to his bag and bring out his little god, Yojo. Then crossing his arms on his breast with Yojo between, he called for the coffin lid (hatch he called it) to be placed over him. The head part turned over with a leather hinge, and there lay Queequeg in his coffin with little but his composed countenance in view. 'Rarmai' (it will do; it is easy),



he murmured at last, and signed to be replaced in his hammock.

But now that he had apparently made every preparation for death; now that his coffin was proved a good fit, Queequeg suddenly rallied; soon there seemed no need of the carpenter's box; and thereupon, when some expressed their delighted surprise, he, in substance, said, that the cause of his sudden convalescence was this: — at a critical moment, he had just recalled a little duty ashore, which he was leaving undone; and therefore had changed his mind about dying: he could not die yet, he averred. They asked him, then, whether to live or die was a matter of his own sovereign will and pleasure. He answered, 'Certainly.' In a word, it was Queequeg's conceit, that if a man made up his mind to live, mere sickness could not kill him: nothing but a whale, or a gale, or some violent, ungovernable, unintelligent destroyer of that sort.

Now, there is this noteworthy difference between savage and civilized; that while a sick, civilized man may be six months convalescing, generally speaking, a sick savage is almost half-well again in a day. So, in good time my Queequeg gained strength; and at length after sitting on the windlass for a few indolent days (but eating with a vigorous appetite) he suddenly leaped to his feet, threw out his arms and legs, gave himself a good stretching, yawned a little bit, and then springing into the head of his hoisted boat, and poising a harpoon, pronounced himself fit for a fight.

With a wild whimsiness, he now used his coffin for a sea-chest; and emptying into it his canvas bag of clothes, set them in order there. Many spare hours he spent, in carv-



ing the lid with all manner of grotesque figures and drawings; and it seemed that hereby he was striving, in his rude way, to copy parts of the twisted tattooing on his body.



## CHAPTER LVII

### THE BLACKSMITH

AVAILING himself of the mild, summer-cool weather that now reigned in these latitudes, and in preparation for the peculiarly active pursuits shortly to be anticipated, Perth, the begrimed, blistered old blacksmith, had not removed his portable forge to the hold again, after concluding his contributory work for Ahab's leg, but still retained it on deck, fast lashed to ringbolts by the foremast; being now almost incessantly invoked by the headsmen, and harpoon-eers, and bowsmen to do some little job for them; altering, or repairing, or new shaping their various weapons and boat furniture. Often he would be surrounded by an eager circle, all waiting to be served; holding boat-spades, pike-heads, harpoons, and lances, and jealously watching his every sooty movement, as he toiled.

With matted beard, and swathed in a bristling shark-skin apron, about mid-day, Perth was standing between his forge and anvil, the latter placed upon an iron-wood log, with one hand holding a pike-head in the coals, and with the other at his forge's lungs, when Captain Ahab came along, carrying in his hand a small rusty-looking leathern bag. While yet a little distance from the forge, moody Ahab paused; till at last, Perth, withdrawing his iron from the fire, began hammering it upon the anvil — the red mass sending off the sparks in thick hovering flights, some of which flew close to Ahab.



'No more gaffs and pikes to-day. Look ye here!' jingling the leathern bag, as if it were full of gold coins. 'I, too, want a harpoon made; one that a thousand yoke of fiends could not part, Perth; something that will stick in a whale like his own fin-bone. There's the stuff,' flinging the pouch upon the anvil. 'Look ye, blacksmith, these are the gathered nail-stubbs of the steel shoes of racing horses.'

'Horse-shoe stubbs, sir? Why, Captain Ahab, thou hast here, then, the best and stubbornest stuff we blacksmiths ever work.'

'I know it, old man; these stubbs will weld together like glue from the melted bones of murderers. Quick! forge me the harpoon. And forge me first, twelve rods for its shank; then wind, and twist, and hammer these twelve together like the yarns and strands of a tow-line. Quick! I'll blow the fire.'

When at last the twelve rods were made, Ahab tried them, one by one, by spiralling them, with his own hand, round a long, heavy iron bolt. 'A flaw!' rejecting the last one. 'Work that over again, Perth.'

This done, Perth was about to begin welding the twelve into one, when Ahab stayed his hand, and said he would weld his own iron. As, then, with regular, gasping hems, he hammered on the anvil, Perth passing to him the glowing rods, one after the other, and the hard pressed forge shooting up its intense straight flame, the Parsee passed silently, and bowing over his head towards the fire, seemed invoking some curse or some blessing on the toil. But, as Ahab looked up, he slid aside.

'What's that bunch of lucifers dodging about there for?' muttered Stubb, looking on from the fore-castle. 'That



Parsee smells fire like a fusee; and smells of it himself, like a hot musket's powder-pan.'

At last the shank, in one complete rod, received its final heat; and as Perth, to temper it, plunged it all hissing into the cask of water near by, the scalding steam shot up into Ahab's bent face.

'Would'st thou brand me, Perth?' wincing for a moment with the pain; 'have I been but forging my own branding-iron, then?'

'Pray God, not that: yet I fear something, Captain Ahab. Is not this harpoon for the White Whale?'

'For the white fiend! But now for the barbs; thou must make them thyself, man. Here are my razors — the best of steel; here, and make the barbs sharp as the needle-sleet of the Icy Sea.'

For a moment, the old blacksmith eyed the razors as though he would fain not use them.

'Take them, man, I have no need for them; for I now neither shave, sup, nor pray till —— but here — to work!'

Fashioned at last into an arrowy shape, and welded by Perth to the shank, the steel soon pointed the end of the iron; and as the blacksmith was about giving the barbs their final heat, prior to tempering them, he cried to Ahab to place the water-cask near.

'No, no — no water for that; I want it of the true death-temper. Ahoy, there! Tashtego, Queequeg, Daggoo! What say ye, pagans! Will ye give me as much blood as will cover this barb?' holding it high up. A cluster of dark nods replied, Yes. Three punctures were made in the heathen flesh, and the White Whale's barbs were then tempered.

'Ego non baptizo te in nomine patris, sed in nomine



diaboli !' deliriously howled Ahab, as the malignant iron scorchingly devoured the baptismal blood.

Now, mustering the spare poles from below, and selecting one of hickory, with the bark still investing it, Ahab fitted the end to the socket of the iron. A coil of new tow-line was then unwound, and some fathoms of it taken to the windlass, and stretched to a great tension. Pressing his foot upon it, till the rope hummed like a harp-string, then eagerly bending over it, and seeing no strandings, Ahab exclaimed, 'Good ! and now for the seizings.'

At one extremity the rope was unstranded, and the separate spread yarns were all braided and woven round the socket of the harpoon ; the pole was then driven hard up into the socket ; from the lower end the rope was traced half way along the pole's length, and firmly secured so, with intertwistings of twine. This done, pole, iron, and rope — like the Three Fates — remained inseparable, and Ahab moodily stalked away with the weapon ; the sound of his ivory leg, and the sound of the hickory pole, both hollowly ringing along every plank.



## CHAPTER LVIII

### THE PEQUOD MEETS THE BACHELOR

AND jolly enough were the sights and the sounds that came bearing down before the wind, some few weeks after Ahab's harpoon had been welded.



HOMeward BOUND

With her hold full of oil, the *Daniel Webster* of Nantucket is under full sail for her home port. A sailor is fastening the flukes of a baby whale to her bowsprit to indicate that the voyage has been a successful one.

It was a Nantucket ship, the *Bachelor*, which had just wedged in her last cask of oil, and bolted down her bursting



hatches; and now, in glad holiday apparel, was joyously, though somewhat vain-gloriously, sailing round among the widely-separated ships on the ground, previous to pointing her prow for home.

The three men at her mast-head wore long streamers of narrow red bunting at their hats; from the stern, a whale-boat was suspended, bottom down; and hanging captive from the bowsprit was seen the long lower jaw of the last whale they had slain. Signals, ensigns, and jacks of all colors were flying from her rigging, on every side. Sideways lashed in each of her three basketed tops were two barrels of sperm; above which, in her top-mast cross-trees, you saw slender breakers of the same precious fluid; and nailed to her main truck was a brazen lamp.

As was afterwards learned, the *Bachelor* had met with the most surprising success; all the more wonderful, for that while cruising in the same seas numerous other vessels had gone entire months without securing a single fish. Not only had barrels of beef and bread been given away to make room for the far more valuable sperm, but additional supplemental casks had been bartered for, from the ships she had met; and these were stowed along the deck, and in the captain's and officers' state-rooms. Even the cabin table itself had been knocked into kindling-wood; and the cabin mess dined off the broad head of an oil-butt, lashed down to the floor for a centrepiece. In the forecastle, the sailors had actually caulked and pitched their chests, and filled them; it was humorously added, that the cook had clapped a head on his largest boiler, and filled it; that the steward had plugged his spare coffee-pot and filled it; that the harpooneers had headed the sockets of their irons and



filled them ; that indeed everything was filled with sperm, except the captain's pantaloons pockets, and those he reserved to thrust his hands into, in self-complacent testimony of his entire satisfaction.

As this glad ship of good luck bore down upon the moody *Pequod*, the barbarian sound of enormous drums came from her fore-castle ; and drawing still nearer, a crowd of her men were seen standing round her huge try-pots, which, covered with the parchment-like *poke* or stomach skin of the black fish, gave forth a loud roar to every stroke of the clenched hands of the crew.

Meanwhile, others of the ship's company were tumultuously busy at the masonry of the try-works, from which the huge pots had been removed. You would have almost thought they were pulling down the cursed Bastille, such wild cries they raised, as the now useless brick and mortar were being hurled into the sea.

Lord and master over all this scene, the captain stood erect on the ship's elevated quarter-deck, so that the whole rejoicing drama was full before him, and seemed merely contrived for his own individual diversion.

And Ahab, he too was standing on his quarter-deck, shaggy and black, with a stubborn gloom ; and as the two ships crossed each other's wakes — one all jubilations for things passed, the other all forebodings as to things to come — their two captains in themselves impersonated the whole striking contrast of the scene.

'Come aboard, come aboard !' cried the gay *Bachelor's* commander, lifting a glass and a bottle in the air.

'Hast seen the White Whale ?' gritted Ahab in reply.

'No ; only heard of him ; but don't believe in him at all,' said the other good-humoredly. 'Come aboard !'



‘Thou art too damned jolly. Sail on. Hast lost any men?’

‘Not enough to speak of — two islanders, that’s all; — but come aboard, old hearty, come along. I’ll soon take that black from your brow. Come along, will ye (merry’s the play); a full ship and homeward bound.’

‘How wondrous familiar is a fool!’ muttered Ahab; then aloud, ‘Thou art a full ship and homeward bound, thou sayst; well, then, call me an empty ship, and outward bound. So go thy ways, and I will mine. Forward there! Set all sail, and keep her to the wind!’

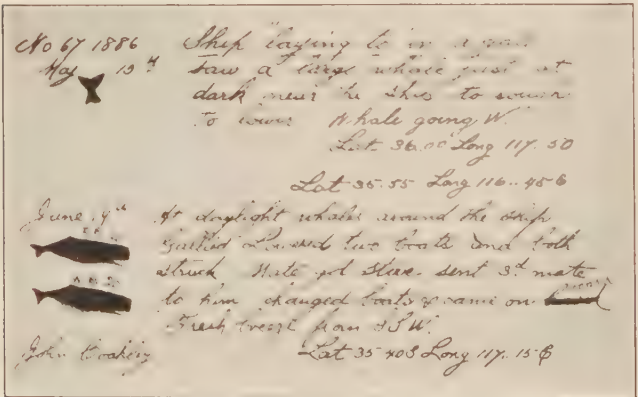
And thus, while the one ship went cheerily before the breeze, the other stubbornly fought against it; and so the two vessels parted; the crew of the *Pequod* looking with grave, lingering glances towards the receding *Bachelor*; but the *Bachelor’s* men never heeding their gaze for the lively revelry they were in. And as Ahab, leaning over the taffrail, eyed the homeward-bound craft, he took from his pocket a small vial of sand, and then looking from the ship to the vial, seemed thereby bringing two remote associations together, for that vial was filled with Nantucket soundings.



## CHAPTER LIX

### THE DYING WHALE

NOT seldom in this life, when, on the right side, fortune's favorites sail close by us, we, though all adroop before, catch somewhat of the rushing breeze, and joyfully feel



#### AN EXTRACT FROM THE LOG OF THE CANTON

Notice the graphic method used by the captain to indicate the number of whales captured. A tail indicates that a whale was sighted but not caught.

our bagging sails fill out. So seemed it with the *Pequod*. For next day after encountering the gay *Bachelor*, whales were seen and four were slain; and one of them by Ahab.



The four whales had died wide apart ; one, far to windward ; one, less distant, to leeward ; one ahead ; one astern. These last three were brought alongside ere night-fall ; but the windward one could not be reached till morning ; and the boat that had killed it lay by its side all night ; and that boat was Ahab's.

The waif-pole was thrust upright into the dead whale's spout-hole ; and the lantern hanging from its top, cast a troubled flickering glare upon the black, glossy back, and far out upon the midnight waves, which gently chafed the whale's broad flank, like soft surf upon a beach.

Ahab and all his boat's crew seemed asleep but the Parsee ; who crouching in the bow, sat watching the sharks, that spectrally played round the whale, and tapped the light cedar planks with their tails. A sound like the moaning in squadrons over Asphaltites of unforgiven ghosts of Gomorrah, ran shuddering through the air.

Started from his slumbers, Ahab, face to face, saw the Parsee ; and hooped round by the gloom of the night they seemed the last men in a flooded world. 'I have dreamed it again,' said he.

'Of the hearses ? Have I not said, old man, that neither hearse nor coffin can be thine ?'

'And who are hearsed that die on the sea ?'

'But I said, old man, that ere thou couldst die on this voyage, two hearses must verily be seen by thee on the sea ; the first not made by mortal hands ; and the visible wood of the last one must be grown in America.'

'Aye, aye ! a strange sight that, Parsee : — a hearse and its plumes floating over the ocean with the waves for the pall-bearers. Ha ! Such a sight we shall not soon see.'



'Believe it or not, thou canst not die till it be seen, old man.'

'And what was that saying about thyself?'

'Though it come to the last, I shall still go before thee thy pilot.'

'And when thou art so gone before — if that ever befall — then ere I can follow, thou must still appear to me, to pilot me still? — Was it not so? Well, then, did I believe all ye say, oh my pilot! I have here two pledges that I shall yet slay Moby Dick and survive it.'

'Take another pledge, old man,' said the Parsee, as his eyes lighted up like fire-flies in the gloom — 'Hemp only can kill thee.'

'The gallows, ye mean. — I am immortal then, on land and on sea,' cried Ahab, with a laugh of derision; — 'Immortal on land and on sea!'

Both were silent again, as one man. The grey dawn came on, and the slumbering crew arose from the boat's bottom, and ere noon the dead whale was brought to the ship.



## CHAPTER LX

### THE QUADRANT

THE season for the Line at length drew near ; and every day when Ahab, coming from his cabin, cast his eyes aloft, the vigilant helmsman would ostentatiously handle his spokes, and the eager mariners quickly run to the braces, and would stand there with all their eyes centrally fixed on the nailed doubloon ; impatient for the order to point the ship's prow for the equator. In good time the order came. It was hard upon high noon ; and Ahab, seated in the bows of his high-hoisted boat, was about taking his wonted daily observation of the sun to determine his latitude.

So, swinging his seated form to the roll of the ship, and with his astrological-looking instrument placed to his eye, he remained in that posture for some moments to catch the precise instant when the sun should gain its precise meridian. Meantime while his whole attention was absorbed, the Parsee was kneeling beneath him on the ship's deck, and with face thrown up like Ahab's, was eyeing the same sun with him ; only the lids of his eyes half hooded their orbs, and his wild face was subdued to an earthly passionlessness. At length the desired observation was taken ; and with his pencil upon his ivory leg, Ahab soon calculated what his latitude must be at that precise instant. Then falling into a moment's revery, he again looked up towards the sun and murmured to himself :



'Thou sea-mark ! thou high and mighty Pilot ! thou tellest me truly where I *am* — but canst thou cast the least hint where I *shall* be ? Or canst thou tell where some other thing besides me is this moment living ? Where is Moby Dick ? This instant thou must be eyeing him. These eyes of mine look into the very eye that is even now beholding him ; aye, that is even now equally beholding the objects on the unknown, thither side of thee, thou sun !'

Then gazing at his quadrant, and handling, one after the other, its numerous cabalistical contrivances, he pondered again, and muttered : ' Foolish toy ! babies' plaything of haughty Admirals, and Commodores, and Captains ; the world brags of thee, of thy cunning and might ; but what after all canst thou do, but tell the poor, pitiful point, where thou thyself happenest to be on this wide planet, and the hand that holds thee : no ! not one jot more ! Curse thee, thou quadrant !' dashing it to the deck, ' no longer will I guide my earthly way by thee ; the level ship's compass, and the level dead-reckoning, by log and by line ; *these* shall conduct me, and show me my place on the sea. Aye,' lighting from the boat to the deck, ' thus I trample on thee, thou paltry thing that feebly pointest on high ; thus I split and destroy thee !'

As the frantic old man thus spoke and thus trampled with his live and dead feet, a sneering triumph that seemed meant for Ahab, and a fatalistic despair that seemed meant for himself — these passed over the mute, motionless Parsee's face. Unobserved he rose and glided away ; while, awestruck by the aspect of their commander, the seamen clustered together on the forecastle, till Ahab, troubledly pacing the deck, shouted out — ' To the braces ! Up helm ! — square in !'



In an instant the yards swung round ; and as the ship half-wheeled upon her heel, her three firm-seated graceful masts erectly poised upon her long, ribbed hull, seemed as the three Horatii pirouetting on one sufficient steed.

Standing between the knight-heads, Starbuck watched the *Pequod's* tumultuous way, and Ahab's also, as he went lurching along the deck.

'I have sat before the dense coal fire and watched it all aglow, full of its tormented flaming life ; and I have seen it wane at last, down, down, to dumbest dust. Old man of oceans ! of all this fiery life of thine, what will at length remain but one little heap of ashes !'

'Aye,' cried Stubb, 'but sea-coal ashes — mind ye that, Mr. Starbuck — sea-coal, not your common charcoal. Well, well ; I heard Ahab mutter, "Here some one thrusts these cards into these old hands of mine ; swears that I must play them, and no others." And Ahab, but thou actest right ; live in the game, and die it !'



## CHAPTER LXI

### THE CANDLES

WARMEST climes but nurse the cruellest fangs : the tiger of Bengal crouches in spiced groves of ceaseless verdure. Skies the most effulgent but basket the deadliest thunders : gorgeous Cuba knows tornadoes that never swept tame northern lands. So, too, it is, that in these resplendent Japanese seas the mariner encounters the direst of all storms, the Typhoon. It will sometimes burst from out that cloudless sky, like an exploding bomb upon a dazed and sleepy town.

Towards evening of that day, the *Pequod* was torn of her canvas, and bare poled was left to fight a Typhoon which had struck her directly ahead. When darkness came on, sky and sea roared and split with the thunder, and blazed with the lightning, that showed the disabled masts fluttering here and there with the rags which the first fury of the tempest had left for its aftersport.

Holding by a shroud, Starbuck was standing on the quarter-deck ; at every flash of the lightning glancing aloft, to see what additional disaster might have befallen the intricate hamper there ; while Stubb and Flask were directing the men in the higher hoisting and firmer lashing of the boats. But all their pains seemed naught. Though lifted to the very top of the cranes, the windward quarter boat (Ahab's) did not escape. A great rolling sea, dashing high up against the reeling ship's high teetering side, stove in



the boat's bottom at the stern, and left it again, all dripping through like a sieve.

'Bad work, bad work! Mr. Starbuck,' said Stubb, regarding the wreck, 'but the sea will have its way. Stubb, for one, can't fight it. You see, Mr. Starbuck, a wave has such a great long start before it leaps, all round the world it runs, and then comes the spring! But as for me, all the start I have to meet it, is just across the deck here. But never mind; it's all in fun: so the old song says;' — (*sings.*)

Oh! jolly is the gale,  
And a joker is the whale,  
A' flourishin' his tail,—

Such a funny, sporty, gamy, jesty, joky, hoky-poky lad, is the  
Ocean, oh!

The scud all a flyin',  
That's his flip only foamin';  
When he stirs in the spicin', —

Such a funny, sporty, gamy, jesty, joky, hoky-poky lad, is the  
Ocean, oh!

Thunder splits the ships,  
But he only smacks his lips,  
A tastin' of this flip, —

Such a funny, sporty, gamy, jesty, joky, hoky-poky lad, is the  
Ocean, oh!

'Avast Stubb,' cried Starbuck, 'let the Typhoon sing, and strike his harp here in our rigging; but if thou art a brave man thou wilt hold thy peace.'

'But I am not a brave man; never said I was a brave man; I am a coward; and I sing to keep up my spirits. And I tell you what it is, Mr. Starbuck, there's no way to stop my singing in this world but to cut my throat. And when that's done, ten to one I sing ye the doxology for a wind-up.'



‘Madman! look through my eyes if thou hast none of thine own.’

‘What! how can you see better of a dark night than anybody else, never mind how foolish?’

‘Here!’ cried Starbuck, seizing Stubb by the shoulder, and pointing his hand towards the weather bow, ‘markest thou not that the gale comes from the eastward, the very course Ahab is to run for Moby Dick? the very course he swung to this day noon? now mark his boat there; where is that stove? In the stern-sheets, man; where he is wont to stand — his stand-point is stove, man! Now jump overboard, and sing away, if thou must!’

‘I don’t half understand ye: what’s in the wind?’

‘Yes, yes, round the Cape of Good Hope is the shortest way to Nantucket,’ soliloquized Starbuck suddenly, heedless of Stubb’s question. ‘The gale that now hammers at us to stave us, we can turn it into a fair wind that will drive us towards home. Yonder, to windward, all is blackness of doom; but to leeward, homeward — I see it lightens up there; but not with the lightning.’

At that moment in one of the intervals of profound darkness, following the flashes, a voice was heard at his side; and almost at the same instant a volly of thunder peals rolled overhead.

‘Who’s there?’

‘Old Thunder!’ said Ahab, groping his way along the bulwarks to his pivot-hole; but suddenly finding his path made plain to him by elbowed lances of fire.

Now, as the lightning rod to a spire on shore is intended to carry off the perilous fluid into the soil; so the kindred rod which at sea some ships carry to each mast, is intended



to conduct it into the water. But as this conductor must descend to considerable depth, that its end may avoid all contact with the hull; and as moreover, if kept constantly towing there, it would be liable to many mishaps, besides interfering not a little with some of the rigging, and more or less impeding the vessel's way in the water; because of all this, the lower parts of a ship's lightning-rods are not always overboard; but are generally made in long slender links, so as to be the more readily hauled up into the chains outside, or thrown down into the sea, as occasion may require.

'The rods! the rods!' cried Starbuck to the crew, suddenly admonished to vigilance by the vivid lightning that had just been darting flambeaux, to light Ahab to his post. 'Are they overboard? drop them over, fore and aft. Quick!'

'Avast!' cried Ahab; 'Let's have fair play here, though we be the weaker side. Yet I'll contribute to raise rods on the Himmalehs and Andes, that all the world may be secured; but out on privileges! Let them be, sir.'

'Look aloft!' cried Starbuck. 'The corpusants! the corpusants!'

All the yard-arms were tipped with a pallid fire; and touched at each tri-pointed lightning-rod-end with three tapering white flames, each of the three tall masts was silently burning in that sulphurous air, like three gigantic wax tapers before an altar.

'Blast the boat! let it go!' cried Stubb at this instant, as a swashing sea heaved up under his own little craft, so that its gunwale violently jammed his hand, as he was passing a lashing. 'Blast it!' — but slipping backward on the deck, his uplifted eyes caught the flames; and immediately



shifting his tone, he cried — 'The corpusants have mercy on us all!'

To sailors, oaths are household words; they will swear in the trance of the calm, and in the teeth of the tempest; they will imprecate curses from the topsail-yard-arms, when most they teeter over to a seething sea; but in all my voyagings, seldom have I heard a common oath when God's burning finger has been laid on the ship; when His 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin' has been woven into the shrouds and the cordage.

While this pallidness was burning aloft, few words were heard from the enchanted crew; who in one thick cluster stood on the forecastle, all their eyes gleaming in that pale phosphorescence, like a far away constellation of stars. Relieved against the ghostly light, the gigantic jet negro, Daggoo, loomed up to thrice his real stature, and seemed the black cloud from which the thunder had come. The parted mouth of Tashtego revealed his shark-white teeth, which strangely gleamed as if they too had been tipped by corpusants; while lit up by the preternatural light, Queequeg's tattooing burned like Satanic blue flames on his body.

The tableau all waned at last with the pallidness aloft; and once more the *Pequod* and every soul on her decks were wrapped in a pall. A moment or two passed, when Starbuck, going forward, pushed against some one. It was Stubb. 'What thinkest thou now, man; I heard thy cry; it was not the same in the song.'

'No, no, it wasn't; I said the corpusants have mercy on us all; and I hope they will, still. But do they only have mercy on long faces? have they no bowels for a laugh? And look ye, Mr. Starbuck — but it's too dark to look.



Hear me, then : I take that mast-head flame we saw for a sign of good luck ; for those masts are rooted in a hold that is going to be chock a' block with sperm-oil, d'ye see ; and so, all that sperm will work up into the masts, like sap in a tree. Yes, our three masts will yet be as three spermaceti candles — that's the good promise we saw.'

At that moment Starbuck caught sight of Stubb's face slowly beginning to glimmer into sight. Glancing upwards, he cried : 'See ! see !' and once more the high tapering flames were beheld with what seemed redoubled supernaturalness in their pallor.

'The corpusants have mercy on us all,' cried Stubb, again.

At the base of the mainmast, full beneath the doubloon and the flame, the Parsee was kneeling in Ahab's front, but with his head bowed away from him ; while near by, from the arched and overhanging rigging, where they had just been engaged securing a spar, a number of the seamen, arrested by the glare, now cohered together, and hung pendulous, like a knot of numbed wasps from a drooping, orchard twig. In various enchanted attitudes, like the standing, or stepping, or running skeletons in Herculaneum, others remained rooted to the deck ; but all their eyes upcast.

'Aye, aye, men !' cried Ahab. 'Look up at it ; mark it well ; the white flame but lights the way to the White Whale ! Hand me those main-mast links there ; I would fain feel this pulse, and let mine beat against it ; blood against fire ! So.'

Then turning — the last link held fast in his left hand, he put his foot upon the Parsee ; and with fixed upward eye, and high-flung right arm, he stood erect before the lofty tri-pointed trinity of flames.



'Oh! thou clear spirit of clear fire. whom on these seas I as Persian once did worship, till in the sacramental act so burned by thee, that to this hour I bear the scar; I now know thee, thou clear spirit, and I now know that thy right worship is defiance. To neither love nor reverence wilt thou be kind; and e'en for hate thou canst but kill; and all are killed. No fearless fool now fronts thee. I own thy speechless, placeless power; but to the last gasp of my earthquake life will dispute its unconditional, unintegral mastery in me.'

'The boat! the boat!' cried Starbuck, 'look at thy boat, old man!'

Ahab's harpoon, the one forged at Perth's fire, remained firmly lashed in its conspicuous crotch, so that it projected beyond his whale-boat's bow; but the sea that had stove its bottom had caused the loose leather sheath to drop off; and from the keen steel barb there now came a levelled flame of pale, forked fire. As the silent harpoon burned there like a serpent's tongue, Starbuck grasped Ahab by the arm — 'God, God is against thee, old man; forbear! 't is an ill voyage! ill begun, ill continued; let me square the yards, while we may, old man, and make a fair wind of it homewards, to go on a better voyage than this.'

Overhearing Starbuck, the panic-stricken crew instantly ran to the braces -- though not a sail was left aloft. For the moment all the aghast mate's thoughts seemed theirs; they raised a half mutinous cry. But dashing the rattling lightning links to the deck, and snatching the burning harpoon, Ahab waved it like a torch among them; swearing to transfix with it the first sailor that but cast loose a rope's end. Petrified by his aspect, and still more shrink-



ing from the fiery dart that he held, the men fell back in dismay, and Ahab again spoke : —

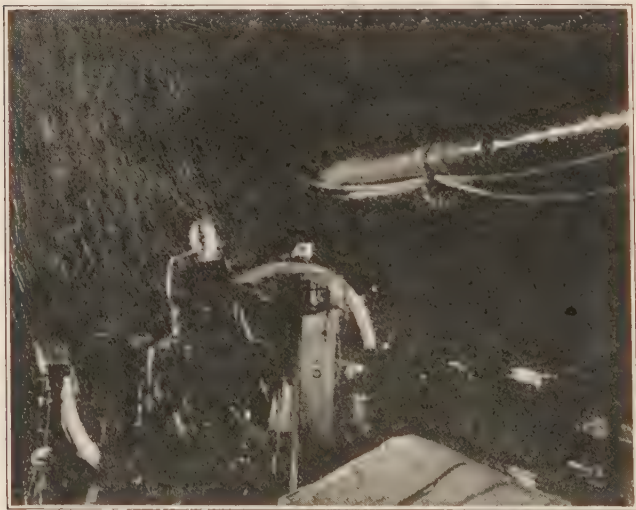
‘All your oaths to hunt the White Whale are as binding as mine ; and heart, soul, and body, lungs and life, old Ahab is bound. And that ye may know to what tune this heart beats : look ye here ; thus I blow out the last fear !’ And with one blast of his breath he extinguished the flame.



## CHAPTER LXII

### THE MUSKET

DURING the most violent shocks of the Typhoon, the man at the *Pequod's* jaw-bone tiller had several times been



JOHN BARRYMORE IN THE STORM SCENE FROM *THE SEA BEAST*

reelingly hurled to the deck by its spasmodic motions, even though preventer tackles had been attached to it — for they were slack — because some play to the tiller was indispensable.



In a severe gale like this, while the ship is but a tossed shuttlecock to the blast, it is by no means uncommon to see the needles in the compasses, at intervals, go round and round. It was thus with the *Pequod's*; at almost every shock the helmsman had not failed to notice the whirling velocity with which they revolved upon the cards; it is a sight that hardly anyone can behold without some sort of unwonted emotion.

Some hours after midnight, the Typhoon abated so much, that through the strenuous exertions of Starbuck and Stubb — one engaged forward and the other aft — the shivered remnants of the jib and fore and main-top-sails were cut adrift from the spars, and went eddying away to leeward, like the feathers of an albatross, which sometimes are cast to the winds when that storm-tossed bird is on the wing.

The three corresponding new sails were now bent and reefed, and a storm-trysail was set further aft; so that the ship soon went through the water with some precision again; and the course — for the present, East-south-east — which he was to steer, if practicable, was once more given to the helmsman. For during the violence of the gale, he had only steered according to its vicissitudes. But as he was now bringing the ship as near her course as possible, watching the compass meanwhile, lo! a good sign! the wind seemed coming round astern; aye, the foul breeze became fair!

Instantly the yards were squared, to the lively song of '*Ho! the fair wind! oh-ye-ho, cheerly, men!*' the crew singing for joy, that so promising an event should so soon have falsified the evil portents preceding it.

In compliance with the standing order of his commander

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— to report immediately, and at any one of the twenty-four hours, any decided change in the affairs of the deck, — Starbuck had no sooner trimmed the yards to the breeze — however reluctantly and gloomily, — than he mechanically went below to apprise Captain Ahab of the circumstance.

Ere knocking at his stateroom, he involuntarily paused before it a moment. The cabin lamp — taking long swings



THE CAPTAIN'S STATEROOM ON  
THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

this way and that — was burning fitfully, and casting fitful shadows upon the old man's bolted door, — a thin one, with fixed blinds inserted, in place of upper panels. The isolated subterraneousness of the cabin made a certain humming silence to reign there, though it was hooped round by all the roar of the elements. The loaded muskets in the rack were shinningly revealed, as they stood upright against the forward bulkhead. Starbuck

was an honest, upright man; but out of Starbuck's heart, at that instant when he saw the muskets, there strangely evolved an evil thought; but so blent with its neutral or good accompaniments that for the instant he hardly knew it for itself.

'He would have shot me once,' he murmured, 'yes, there's the very musket that he pointed at me; — that one with the studded stock; let me touch it — lift it. Strange,



that I, who have handled so many deadly lances, strange, that I should shake so now. Loaded? I must see. Aye, aye; and powder in the pan; — that's not good. Best spill it? — wait. I'll cure myself of this. I'll hold the musket boldly while I think. — I come to report a fair wind to him. But how fair? Fair for death and doom, — *that's* fair for Moby Dick. It's a fair wind that's only fair for that accursed fish. — The very tube he pointed at me! — the very one; *this* one — I hold it here; he would have killed me with the very thing I handle now. — Aye and he would fain kill all his crew. Does he not say he will not strike his spars to any gale? Has he not dashed his heavenly quadrant? and in these same perilous seas, gropes he not his way by mere dead reckoning of the error-abounding log? and in this very Typhoon, did he not swear that he would have no lightning-rods? But shall this crazed old man be tamely suffered to drag a whole ship's company down to doom with him? — Yes, it would make him the wilful murderer of thirty men and more, if this ship come to any deadly harm; and come to deadly harm, my soul swears this ship will, if Ahab have his way. If, then, he were this instant — put aside, that crime would not be his. Ha! is he muttering in his sleep? Yes, just there, — in there, he's sleeping. Sleeping? aye, but still alive, and soon awake again. I can't withstand thee, then, old man. Not reasoning; not remonstrance; not entreaty wilt thou hearken to; all this thou scornest. Flat obedience to thy own flat commands, this is all thou breathest. Aye, and say'st the men have vow'd thy vow; say'st all of us are Ahabs. Great God forbid! — But is there no other way? no lawful way? — Make him a prisoner to be taken home? What! hope to wrest this old



man's living power from his own living hands? Only a fool would try it. Say he were pinioned even; knotted all over with ropes and hawsers; chained down to ring-bolts on this cabin floor; he would be more hideous than a caged tiger, then. I could not endure the sight; could not possibly fly his howlings; all comfort, sleep itself, inestimable reason would leave me on the long intolerable voyage. What, then, remains? The land is hundreds of leagues away, and locked Japan the nearest. I stand alone here upon an open sea, with two oceans and a whole continent between me and law. — Aye, aye, 'tis so. — Is heaven a murderer when its lightning strikes a would-be murderer in his bed, tinding sheets and skin together? — And would I be a murderer, then, if' — and slowly, stealthily, and half sideways looking, he placed the loaded musket's end against the door.

'On this level, Ahab's hammock swings within; his head this way. A touch, and Starbuck may survive to hug his wife and child again. — Oh Mary! Mary! — boy! boy! boy! — But if I wake thee not to death, old man, who can tell to what unsounded deeps Starbuck's body this day week may sink, with all the crew! Great God, where art Thou? Shall I? shall I? — The wind has gone down and shifted, sir; the fore and main topsails are reefed and set; she heads her course.'

'Stern all! Oh Moby Dick, I clutch thy heart at last!'

Such were the sounds that now came hurtling from out the old man's tormented sleep, as if Starbuck's voice had caused the long dumb dream to speak.

The yet levelled musket shook like a drunkard's arm against the panel; Starbuck seemed wrestling with an



angel; but turning from the door, he placed the death-tube in its rack, and left the place.

‘He’s too sound asleep, Mr. Stubb; go thou down, and wake him, and tell him. I must see to the deck here. Thou know’st what to say.’



## CHAPTER LXIII

### THE NEEDLE

NEXT morning the not-yet-subsided sea rolled in long slow billows of mighty bulk, and striving in the *Pequod's* gurgling track, pushed her on like giants' palms outspread. The strong, unstaggering breeze abounded so, that sky and air seemed vast outbellying sails; the whole world boomed before the wind.

Long maintaining an enchanted silence, Ahab stood apart; and every time the teetering ship loweringly pitched down her bowsprit, he turned to eye the bright sun's rays produced ahead; and when she profoundly settled by the stern, he turned behind, and saw the sun's rearward place, and how the same yellow rays were blending with his un-deviating wake.

'Ha, ha, my ship! thou mightest well be taken now for the sea-chariot of the sun. Ho! ho! all ye nations before my prow, I bring the sun to ye! Yoke on the further billows; hallo! a tandem, I drive the sea!'

But suddenly reined back by some counter thought, he hurried towards the helm, huskily demanding how the ship was heading.

'East-sou-east, sir,' said the frightened steersman.

'Thou liest!' smiting him with his clenched fist. 'Heading East at this hour in the morning, and the sun astern?'



Upon this every soul was confounded; for the phenomenon just then observed by Ahab had unaccountably escaped every one else; but its very blinding palpableness must have been the cause.

Thrusting his head half way into the binnacle, Ahab caught one glimpse of the compasses; his uplifted arm slowly fell; for a moment he almost seemed to stagger. Standing behind him Starbuck looked, and lo! the two compasses pointed East, and the *Pequod* was as infallibly going West.

But ere the first wild alarm could get out abroad among the crew, the old man with a rigid laugh exclaimed, 'I have it! It has happened before. Mr. Starbuck, last night's thunder turned our compasses — that's all. Thou hast before now heard of such a thing, I take it.'

'Aye; but never before has it happened to me, sir,' said the pale mate, gloomily.

Here, it must needs be said, that accidents like this have in more than one case occurred to ships in violent storms. The magnetic energy, as developed in the mariner's needle, is, as all know, essentially one with the electricity beheld in heaven; hence it is not to be much marvelled at, that such things should be. In instances where the lightning has actually struck the vessel, so as to smite down some of the spars and rigging, the effect upon the needle has at times been still more fatal; all its loadstone virtue being annihilated, so that the before magnetic steel was of no more use than an old wife's knitting needle. But in either case, the needle never again, of itself, recovers the original virtue thus marred or lost; and if the binnacle compasses be affected, the same fate reaches all the others that may be



in the ship; even were the lowermost one inserted into the kelson.

Deliberately standing before the binnacle, and eyeing the transpointed compasses, the old man, with the sharp of his extended hand, now took the precise bearing of the sun, and satisfied that the needles were exactly inverted, shouted out his orders for the ship's course to be changed accordingly. The yards were hard up; and once more the *Pequod* thrust her undaunted bows into the opposing wind, for the supposed fair one had only been juggling her.

Meanwhile, whatever were his own secret thoughts, Starbuck said nothing, but quietly he issued all requisite orders; while Stubb and Flask — who in some small degree seemed then to be sharing his feelings — likewise uncomplainingly acquiesced. As for the men, though some of them lowly rumbled, their fear of Ahab was greater than their fear of Fate. But as ever before, the pagan harpooneers remained almost wholly unimpressed; or if impressed, it was only with a certain magnetism shot into their congenial hearts from inflexible Ahab's.

For a space the old man walked the deck in rolling reveries. But chancing to slip with his ivory heel, he saw the crushed copper sight-tubes of the quadrant he had the day before dashed to the deck.

'Thou poor, proud heaven-gazer and sun's pilot! yesterday I wrecked thee, and to-day the compasses would fain have wrecked me. So, so. But Ahab is lord over the level loadstone yet. Mr. Starbuck — a lance without the pole; a top-maul, and the smallest of the sail-maker's needles. Quick!'

Accessory, perhaps, to the impulse dictating the thing he was now about to do, were certain prudential motives,



whose object might have been to revive the spirits of his crew by a stroke of his subtile skill, in a matter so wondrous as that of the inverted compasses. Besides, the old man well knew that to steer by transpointed needles, though clumsily practicable, was not a thing to be passed over by superstitious sailors, without some shudderings and evil portents.

‘Men,’ said he, steadily turning upon the crew, as the mate handed him the things he had demanded, ‘my men, the thunder turned old Ahab’s needles; but out of this bit of steel Ahab can make one of his own, that will point as true as any.’

Abashed glances of servile wonder were exchanged by the sailors, as this was said; and with fascinated eyes they awaited whatever magic might follow. But Starbuck looked away.

With a blow from the top-maul Ahab knocked off the steel head of the lance, and then handing to the mate the long iron rod remaining, bade him hold it upright, without its touching the deck. Then, with the maul, after repeatedly smiting the upper end of this iron rod, he placed the blunted needle endwise on the top of it, and less strongly hammered that, several times, the mate still holding the rod as before. Then going through some small strange motions with it — whether indispensable to the magnetizing of the steel, or merely intended to augment the awe of the crew, is uncertain — he called for linen thread; and moving to the binnacle, slipped out the two reversed needles there, and horizontally suspended the sail-needle by its middle, over one of the compass cards. At first, the steel went round and round, quivering and vibrating at either end; but at last it settled to its place, when Ahab,



who had been intently watching for this result, stepped frankly back from the binnacle, and pointing his stretched arm towards it, exclaimed, — ‘Look ye, for yourselves, if Ahab be not lord of the level loadstone! The sun is East, and that compass swears it!’

One after another they peered in, for nothing but their own eyes could persuade such ignorance as theirs, and one after another they slunk away.

In his fiery eyes of scorn and triumph, you then saw Ahab in all his fatal pride.



## CHAPTER LXIV

### THE LOG AND LINE

WHILE now the fated *Pequod* had been so long afloat this voyage, the log and line had but very seldom been in use. Owing to a confident reliance upon other means of determining the vessel's place, some merchantmen, and many whalemén, especially when cruising, wholly neglect to heave the log; though at the same time, and frequently more for form's sake than anything else, regularly putting down upon the customary slate the course steered by the ship, as well as the presumed average rate of progression every hour. It had been thus with the *Pequod*. The wooden reel and angular log attached hung, long untouched, just beneath the railing of the after bulwarks. Rains and spray had damped it; sun and wind had warped it; all the elements had combined to rot a thing that hung so idly. But heedless of all this, his mood seized Ahab, as he happened to glance upon the reel, not many hours after the magnet scene, and he remembered how his quadrant was no more, and recalled his frantic oath about the level log and line. The ship was sailing plungingly; astern the billows rolled in riots.

‘Forward, there! Heave the log!’

Two seamen came. The golden-hued Tahitian and the grizzly Manxman. ‘Take the reel, one of ye, I’ll heave.’

They went towards the extreme stern, on the ship’s lee side, where the deck, with the oblique energy of the wind,



was now almost dipping into the creamy, sidelong-rushing sea.

The Manxman took the reel, and holding it high up, by the projecting handle-ends of the spindle, round which the spool of line revolved, so stood with the angular log hanging downwards, till Ahab advanced to him.

Ahab stood before him, and was lightly unwinding some thirty or forty turns to form a preliminary hand-coil to toss overboard, when the old Manxman, who was intently eyeing both him and the line, made bold to speak.

'Sir, I mistrust it : this line looks far gone, long heat and wet have spoiled it.'

'Twill hold, old gentleman. Long heat and wet, have they spoiled thee? Thou seem'st to hold. Or, truer perhaps, life holds thee ; not thou it.'

'I hold the spool, sir. But just as my captain says. With these grey hairs of mine 'tis not worth while disputing, 'specially with a superior, who'll ne'er confess.'

'What's that? There now's a patched professor in Queen Nature's granite-founded College ; but methinks he's too subservient. Where wert thou born?'

'In the little rocky Isle of Man, sir.'

'Excellent ! Thou'st hit the world by that.'

'I know not, sir, but I was born there.'

'In the Isle of Man, hey? Well, the other way, it's good. Here's a man from Man ; a man born in once independent Man, and now unmanned of Man ; which is sucked in - by what? Up with the reel ! The dead, blind wall butts all inquiring heads at last. Up with it ! So.'

The log was heaved. The loose coils rapidly straightened out in a long dragging line astern, and then, instantly, the reel began to whirl. In turn, jerkingly raised and



lowered by the rolling billows, the towing resistance of the log caused the old reelman to stagger strangely.

‘Hold hard!’

Snap! the overstrained line sagged down in one long festoon; the tugging log was gone.

‘I crush the quadrant, the thunder turns the needles, and now the mad sea parts the log-line. But Ahab can mend all. Haul in here, Tahitian; reel up, Manxman. And look ye, let the carpenter make another log, and mend thou the line. See to it.’



## CHAPTER LXV

### THE LIFE-BUOY

STEERING now south-eastward by Ahab's levelled steel, and her progress solely determined by Ahab's level log and line; the *Pequod* held on her path towards the Equator. Making so long a passage through such unfrequented waters, descrying no ships, and ere long, sideways impelled by unvarying trade winds, over waves monotonously mild; all these seemed the strange calm things preluding some riotous and desperate scene.

At last, when the ship drew near to the outskirts, as it were, of the Equatorial fishing-ground, and in the deep darkness that goes before the dawn, was sailing by a cluster of rocky islets; the watch — then headed by Flask — was startled by a cry so plaintively wild and unearthly — like half-articulated wailings of the ghosts of all Herod's murdered Innocents — that one and all, they started from their reveries, and for the space of some moments stood, or sat, or leaned all transfixedly listening, like the carved Roman slave, while that wild cry remained within hearing. The Christian or civilized part of the crew said it was mermaids, and shuddered; but the pagan harpooneers remained unappalled. Yet the grey Manxman — the oldest mariner of all — declared that the wild thrilling sounds that were heard, were the voices of newly drowned men in the sea.

Below in his hammock, Ahab did not hear of this till grey dawn, when he came to the deck; it was then



recounted to him by Flask, not unaccompanied with hinted dark meanings. He hollowly laughed, and thus explained the wonder.

Those rocky islands the ship had passed were the resort of great numbers of seals, and some young seals that had lost their dams, or some dams that had lost their cubs, must have risen nigh the ship and kept company with her, crying and sobbing with their human sort of wail. But this only the more affected some of them, because most mariners cherish a very superstitious feeling about seals, arising not only from their peculiar tones when in distress, but also from the human look of their round heads and semi-intelligent faces, seen peeringly uprising from the water alongside. In the sea, under certain circumstances, seals have more than once been mistaken for men.

But the bodings of the crew were destined to receive a most plausible confirmation in the fate of one of their number that morning. At sun-rise this man went from his hammock to his mast-head at the fore; and whether it was that he was not yet half waked from his sleep (for sailors sometimes go aloft in a transition state), whether it was thus with the man, there is now no telling; but, be that as it may, he had not been long at his perch, when a cry was heard — a cry and a rushing — and looking up, they saw a falling phantom in the air; and looking down, a little tossed heap of white bubbles in the blue of the sea.

The life-buoy — a long slender cask — was dropped from the stern, where it always hung obedient to a cunning spring; but no hand rose to seize it, and the sun having long beat upon this cask it had shrunken, so that it slowly filled, and the parched wood also filled at its every pore; and the studded iron-bound cask followed the sailor to the



bottom, as if to yield him his pillow, though in sooth but a hard one.

And thus the first man of the *Pequod* that mounted the mast to look out for the White Whale, on the White Whale's own peculiar ground ; that man was swallowed up in the deep. But a few, perhaps, thought of that at the time. Indeed, in some sort, they were not grieved at this event, at least as a portent : for they regarded it, not as a foreshadowing of evil in the future, but as the fulfilment of an evil already presaged. They declared that now they knew the reason of those wild shrieks they had heard the night before. But again the old Manxman said nay.

The lost life-buoy was now to be replaced ; Starbuck was directed to see to it ; but as no cask of sufficient lightness could be found, and as in the feverish eagerness of what seemed the approaching crisis of the voyage, all hands were impatient of any toil but what was directly connected with its final end, whatever that might prove to be ; therefore, they were going to leave the ship's stern unprovided with a buoy, when by certain strange signs and inuendoes Queequeg hinted a hint concerning his coffin.

'A life-buoy of a coffin !' cried Starbuck, starting.

'Rather queer, that, I should say,' said Stubb.

'It will make a good enough one,' said Flask, 'the carpenter here can arrange it easily.'

'Bring it up ; there's nothing else for it,' said Starbuck, after a melancholy pause. 'Rig it, carpenter ; do not look at me so — the coffin, I mean. Dost thou hear me ? Rig it.'

'And shall I nail down the lid, sir ?' moving his hand as with a hammer.

'Aye.'



‘And shall I caulk the seams, sir?’ moving his hand as with a caulking-iron.

‘Aye.’

‘And shall I then pay over the same with pitch, sir?’ moving his hand as with a pitch-pot.

‘Away! what possesses thee to this? Make a life-buoy of the coffin, and no more. — Mr. Stubb, Mr. Flask, come forward with me.’

‘He goes off in a huff. The whole he can endure; at the parts he baulks. Now I don’t like this. I make a leg for Captain Ahab, and he wears it like a gentleman; but I make a bandbox for Queequeg, and he won’t put his head into it. Are all my pains to go for nothing with that coffin? And now I’m ordered to make a life-buoy of it. It’s like turning an old coat; going to bring the flesh on the other side now. I don’t like this cobbling sort of business — I don’t like it at all; it’s undignified; it’s not my place. Let tinkers’ brats do tinkerings; we are their betters. I like to take in hand none but clean, virgin, fair-and-square mathematical jobs, something that regularly begins at the beginning, and is at the middle when midway, and comes to an end at the conclusion; not a cobbler’s job, that’s at an end in the middle, and at the beginning at the end. But never mind. We workers in woods make bridal-bedsteads and card-tables, as well as coffins and hearses. We work by the month, or by the job, or by the profit; not for us to ask the why and wherefore of our work, unless it be too confounded cobbling, and then we stash it if we can. Hem! I’ll do the job, now, tenderly. I’ll have me — let’s see — how many in the ship’s company, all told? But I’ve forgotten. Any way, I’ll have me thirty separate, Turk’s-headed life-lines, each



three feet long hanging all round to the coffin. Then, if the hull go down, there'll be thirty lively fellows all fighting for one coffin, a sight not seen very often beneath the sun! Come hammer, caulking-iron, pitchpot, and marling-spike! Let's to it.'



## CHAPTER LXVI

### THE PEQUOD MEETS THE RACHEL

NEXT day, a large ship, the *Rachel*, was descried, bearing directly down upon the *Pequod*, all her spars thickly clustering with men. At the time the *Pequod* was making good speed through the water; but as the broad-winged windward stranger shot nigh to her, the boastful sails all fell together as blank bladders that are burst, and all life fled from the smitten hull.

‘Bad news; she brings bad news,’ muttered the old Manxman. But ere her commander, who, with trumpet to mouth, stood up in his boat; ere he could hopefully hail, Ahab’s voice was heard.

‘Hast seen the White Whale?’

‘Aye, yesterday. Have ye seen a whale-boat adrift?’

Throttling his joy, Ahab negatively answered this unexpected question; and would then have fain boarded the stranger, when the stranger captain himself, having stopped his vessel’s way, was seen descending her side. A few keen pulls, and his boat-hook soon clinched the *Pequod*’s main-chains, and he sprang to the deck. Immediately he was recognised by Ahab for a Nantucketer he knew. But no formal salutation was exchanged.

‘Where was he? — not killed! — not killed!’ cried Ahab, closely advancing. ‘How was it?’

It seemed that somewhat late on the afternoon of the day previous, while three of the stranger’s boats were



engaged with a shoal of whales, which had led them some four or five miles from the ship; and while they were yet in swift chase to windward, the white hump and head of Moby Dick had suddenly loomed up out of the water, not very far to leeward; whereupon, the fourth rigged boat — a reserved one — had been instantly lowered in chase. After a keen sail before the wind, this fourth boat — the swiftest keeled of all — seemed to have succeeded in fastening — at least, as well as the man at the mast-head could tell anything about it. In the distance he saw the diminished dotted boat; and then a swift gleam of bubbling white water; and after that nothing more; whence it was concluded that the stricken whale must have indefinitely run away with his pursuers, as often happens. There was some apprehension, but no positive alarm, as yet. The recall signals were placed in the rigging; darkness came on; and forced to pick up her three far to windward boats — ere going in quest of the fourth one in the precisely opposite direction — the ship had not only been necessitated to leave that boat to its fate till near midnight, but, for the time, to increase her distance from it. But the rest of her crew being at last safe aboard, she crowded all sail — stunsail on stunsail — after the missing boat; kindling a fire in her try-pots for a beacon; and every other man aloft on the look-out. But though when she had thus sailed a sufficient distance to gain the presumed place of the absent ones when last seen; though she then paused to lower her spare boats to pull all around her; and not finding anything, had again dashed on; again paused, and lowered her boats; and though she had thus continued doing till daylight; yet not the least glimpse of the missing keel had been seen.



The story told, the stranger Captain immediately went on to reveal his object in boarding the *Pequod*. He desired that ship to unite with his own in the search; by sailing over the sea some four or five miles apart, on parallel lines, and so sweeping a double horizon, as it were.

‘I will wager something now’ whispered Stubb to Flask, ‘that some one in that missing boat wore off that Captain’s best coat; mayhap, his watch — he’s so cursed anxious to get it back. Who ever heard of two pious whale-ships cruising after one missing whale-boat in the height of the whaling season? See, Flask, only see how pale he looks — pale in the very buttons of his eyes — look — it wasn’t the coat — it must have been the —’

‘My boy, my own boy is among them. For God’s sake — I beg, I conjure’ — here exclaimed the stranger Captain to Ahab, who thus far had but icily received his petition. ‘For eight-and-forty hours let me charter your ship — I will gladly pay for it, and roundly pay for it — if there be no other way — for eight-and-forty hours only — only that — you must, oh, you must, and you *shall* do this thing.’

‘His son!’ cried Stubb, ‘oh, it’s his son he’s lost! I take back the coat and watch — what says Ahab? We must save that boy.’

‘He’s drowned with the rest on ’em, last night,’ said the old Manx sailor standing behind them; ‘I heard; all of ye heard their spirits.’

Now, as it shortly turned out, what made this incident of the *Rachel*’s the more melancholy, was the circumstance, that not only was one of the Captain’s sons among the number of the missing boat’s crew; but among the number of the other boats’ crews, at the same time, but on the other



hand, separated from the ship during the dark vicissitudes of the chase, there had been still another son ; so that for a time, the wretched father was plunged to the bottom of the cruellest perplexity ; which was only solved for him by his chief mate's instinctively adopting the ordinary procedure of a whale-ship in such emergencies, that is, when placed between jeopardized but divided boats, always to pick up the majority first. But the captain, for some unknown constitutional reason, had refrained from mentioning all this, and not till forced to it by Ahab's iciness did he allude to his one yet missing boy ; a little lad, but twelve years old, whose father with the earnest but unmisgiving hardihood of a Nantucketer's paternal love, had thus early sought to initiate him in the perils and wonders of a vocation almost immemorially the destiny of all his race. Nor does it unfrequently occur, that Nantucket captains will send a son of such tender age away from them, for a protracted three or four years' voyage in some other ship than their own ; so that their first knowledge of a whaleman's career shall be unenervated by any chance display of a father's natural but untimely partiality, or undue apprehensiveness and concern.

Meantime, now the stranger was still beseeching his poor boon of Ahab ; and Ahab still stood like an anvil, receiving every shock, but without the least quivering of his own.

'I will not go,' said the stranger, 'till you say *aye* to me. Do to me as you would have me do to you in the like case. For *you* too have a boy, Captain Ahab — though but a child, and nestling safely at home now — a child of your old age too — Yes, yes, you relent ; I see it — run, run, men, now, and stand by to square in the yards.'



‘Avast,’ cried Ahab — ‘touch not a rope-yarn’; then in a voice that prolongingly moulded every word — ‘Captain Gardiner, I will not do it. Even now I lose time. Good bye, good bye. God bless ye, man, and may I forgive myself, but I must go. Mr. Starbuck, look at the binnacle watch, and in three minutes from this present instant warn off all strangers: then brace forward again, and let the ship sail as before.’

Hurriedly turning, with averted face, he descended into his cabin, leaving the strange captain transfixed at this unconditional and utter rejection of his so earnest suit. But starting from his enchantment, Gardiner silently hurried to the side; more fell than stepped into his boat, and returned to his ship.

Soon the two ships diverged their wakes; and long as the strange vessel was in view, she was seen to yaw hither and thither at every dark spot, however small, on the sea. This way and that her yards were swung around; starboard and larboard, she continued to tack; now she beat against a head sea; and again it pushed her before it; while all the while, her masts and yards were thickly clustered with men, as three tall cherry trees, when the boys are cherrying among the boughs.

But by her still halting course and winding, woful way, you plainly saw that this ship that so wept with spray, still remained without comfort. She was *Rachel*, weeping for her children, because they were not.



## CHAPTER LXVII

### THE HAT

AND now that at the proper time and place, after so long and wide a preliminary cruise, Ahab, — all other whaling waters swept — seemed to have chased his foe into an ocean-fold, to slay him the more securely there; now, that he found himself hard by the very latitude and longitude where his tormenting wound had been inflicted; now that a vessel had been spoken which on the very day preceding had actually encountered Moby Dick; — and now that all his successive meetings with various ships contrastingly concurred to show the demoniac indifference with which the White Whale tore his hunters, whether sinning or sinned against; now it was that there lurked a something in the old man's eyes, which it was hardly sufferable for feeble souls to see.

In this foreshadowing interval too, all humor, forced or natural, vanished. Stubb no more strove to raise a smile; Starbuck no more strove to check one. Alike, joy and sorrow, hope and fear, seemed ground to finest dust, and powdered, for the time, in the clamped mortar of Ahab's iron soul. Like machines, they dumbly moved about the deck, ever conscious that the old man's despot eye was on them.

But did you deeply scan him in his more secret confidential hours; when he thought no glance but one was on him; then you would have seen that even as Ahab's



eyes so awed the crew's, the inscrutable Parsee's glance awed his; or somehow, at least, in some wild way, at times affected it. Such an added, gliding strangeness began to invest the thin Fedallah now; such ceaseless shudderings shook him; that the men looked dubious at him; half uncertain, as it seemed, whether indeed he were a mortal substance, or else a tremulous shadow cast upon the deck by some unseen being's body. And that shadow was always hovering there. For not by night, even, had Fedallah ever certainly been known to slumber, or go below. He would stand still for hours: but never sat or leaned; his wan but wondrous eyes did plainly say — We two watchmen never rest.

Nor, at any time, by night or day could the mariners now step upon the deck, unless Ahab was before them; either standing in his pivot-hole, or exactly pacing the planks between two undeviating limits, — the man-mast and the mizzen; or else they saw him standing in the cabin-scuttle, — his living foot advanced upon the deck, as if to step; his hat slouched heavily over his eyes; so that however motionless he stood, however the days and nights were added on, that he had not swung in his hammock; yet hidden beneath that slouching hat, they could never tell unerringly whether, for all this, his eyes were really closed at times: or whether he was still intently scanning them; no matter, though he stood so in the scuttle for a whole hour on the stretch, and the unheeded night-damp gathered in beads of dew upon that stone-carved coat and hat. The clothes that the night had wet, the next day's sunshine dried upon him; and so, day after day, and night after night; he went no more beneath the



planks; whatever he wanted from the cabin that thing he sent for.

He ate in the same open air: that is, his two only meals, — breakfast and dinner: supper he never touched; nor reaped his beard; which darkly grew all gnarled, as unearthed roots of trees blown over, which still grow idly on at naked base, though perished in the upper verdure. But though his whole life was now become one watch on deck; and though the Parsee's mystic watch was without intermission as his own: yet these two never seemed to speak — one man to the other — unless at long intervals some passing unmomentous matter made it necessary. Though such a potent spell seemed secretly to join the twain; openly, and to the awe-struck crew, they seemed pole-like asunder. If by day they chanced to speak one word; by night, dumb men were both, so far as concerned the slightest verbal interchange. At times, for longest hours, without a single hail, they stood far parted in the starlight; Ahab in his scuttle, the Parsee by the mainmast; but still fixedly gazing upon each other; as if in the Parsee Ahab saw his forethrown shadow, in Ahab the Parsee his abandoned substance.

And yet, somehow, did Ahab — in his own proper self, as daily, hourly, and every instant, commandingly revealed to his subordinates, — Ahab seemed an independent lord; the Parsee but his slave. Still again both seemed yoked together, and an unseen tyrant driving them; the lean shade siding the solid rib. For be this Parsee what he may, all rib and keel was solid Ahab.

At the first faintest glimmering of the dawn, his iron voice was heard from aft — 'Man the mastheads!' — and all through the day, till after sunset and after twilight, the



same voice every hour, at the striking of the helmsman's bell, was heard — 'What d'ye see? — sharp! sharp!'

But when three or four days had slid by, after meeting the children-seeking *Rachel*; and no spout had yet been seen; the monomaniac old man seemed distrustful of his crew's fidelity; at least, of nearly all except the Pagan harpooners; he seemed to doubt, even, whether Stubb and Flask might not willingly overlook the sight he sought. But if these suspicions were really his, he sagaciously refrained from verbally expressing them, however his actions might seem to hint them.

'I will have the first sight of the whale myself,' — he said. 'Aye! Ahab must have the doubloon!' and with his own hands he rigged a nest of basketed bowlines; and sending a hand aloft, with a single sheaved block, to secure to the mainmast head, he received the two ends of the downward-reeved rope; and attaching one to his basket prepared a pin for the other end, in order to fasten it at the rail. This done, with that end yet in his hand and standing beside the pin, he looked round upon his crew, sweeping from one to the other; pausing his glance long upon Daggoo, Queequeg, Tashtego; but shunning Fedallah; and then settling his firm relying eye upon the chief mate, said, — 'Take the rope, sir — I give it into thy hands, Starbuck.' Then arranging his person in the basket, he gave the word for them to hoist him to his perch, Starbuck being the one who secured the rope at last; and afterwards stood near it. And thus, with one hand clinging round the royal mast, Ahab gazed abroad upon the sea for miles and miles, — ahead, astern, this side, and that, — within the wide expanded circle commanded at so great a height.



When in working with his hands at some lofty almost isolated place in the rigging, which chances to afford no foothold, the sailor at sea is hoisted up to that spot, and sustained there by the rope: under these circumstances, its fastened end on deck is always given in strict charge to some one man who has the special watch of it. Because in such a wilderness of running rigging, whose various different relations aloft cannot always be infallibly discerned by what is seen of them at the deck; and when the deck-ends of these ropes are being every few minutes cast down from the fastenings, it would be but a natural fatality, if, unprovided with a constant watchman, the hoisted sailor should by some carelessness of the crew be cast adrift and fall all swooping to the sea. So Ahab's proceedings in this matter were not unusual; the only strange thing about them seemed to be, that Starbuck, almost the one only man who had ever ventured to oppose him with anything in the slightest degree approaching to decision — one of those too, whose faithfulness on the lookout he had seemed to doubt somewhat; it was strange that this was the very man he should select for his watchman; freely giving his whole life into such an otherwise, distrusted person's hands.

Now, the first time Ahab was perched aloft; ere he had been there ten minutes; one of those redbilled savage sea-hawks which so often fly incommodiously close round the manned mast-heads of whalers in these latitudes; one of these birds came wheeling and screaming round his head in a maze of untrackably swift circlings. Then it darted a thousand feet straight up into the air; then spiralized downwards, and went eddying again round his head.



But with his gaze fixed upon the dim and distant horizon, Ahab seemed not to mark this wild bird; nor, indeed, would any one else have marked it much, it being no uncommon circumstance; only now almost the least heedful eye seemed to see some sort of cunning meaning in almost every sight.

‘Your hat, your hat, sir!’ suddenly cried the Sicilian seaman, who being posted at the mizzen-mast-head, stood directly behind Ahab, though somewhat lower than his level, and with a deep gulf of air dividing them.

But already the sable wing was before the old man’s eyes; the long hooked bill at his head: with a scream, the black hawk darted away with his prize.

An eagle flew thrice round Tarquin’s head, removing his cap to replace it, and thereupon Tanaquil, his wife, declared that Tarquin would be king of Rome. But only by the replacing of the cap was that omen accounted good. Ahab’s hat was never restored; the wild hawk flew on and on with it; far in advance of the prow: and at last disappeared; while from the point of that disappearance, a minute black spot was dimly discerned, falling from that vast height into the sea.



## CHAPTER LXVIII

### THE PEQUOD MEETS THE DELIGHT

THE intense *Pequod* sailed on; the rolling waves and days went by; the life-buoy-coffin still lightly swung; and another ship, most miserably misnamed the *Delight*, was descried. As she drew nigh, all eyes were fixed upon her broad beams, called shears, which, in some whaling-ships, cross the quarter-deck at the height of eight or nine feet; serving to carry the spare, unrigged, or disabled boats.

Upon the stranger's shears were beheld the shattered, white ribs, and some few splintered planks, of what had once been a whale-boat; but you now saw through this wreck, as plainly as you see through the peeled, half-unhinged, and bleaching skeleton of a horse.

'Hast seen the White Whale?'

'Look!' replied the hollow-cheeked captain from his taffrail; and with his trumpet he pointed to the wreck.

'Hast killed him?'

'The harpoon is not yet forged that ever will do that,' answered the other, sadly glancing upon a rounded hammock on the deck, whose gathered sides some noiseless sailors were busy in sewing together.

'Not forged!' and snatching Perth's levelled iron from the crotch, Ahab held it out, exclaiming — 'Look ye, Nantucketer; here in this hand I hold his death! Tempered in blood, and tempered by lightning are these barbs;



and I swear to temper them triply in that hot place behind the fin, where the White Whale most feels his accursed life !’

‘Then God keep thee, old man — see’st thou that’ — pointing to the hammock — ‘I bury but one of five stout men, who were alive only yesterday ; but were dead ere night. Only *that* one I bury ; the rest were buried before they died ; you sail upon their tomb.’ Then turning to his crew — ‘Are ye ready there ? place the plank then on the rail, and lift the body ; so, then — Oh ! God’ — advancing towards the hammock with uplifted hands — ‘may the resurrection and the life ——’

‘Brace forward ! Up helm !’ cried Ahab like lightning to his men.

But the suddenly started *Pequod* was not quick enough to escape the sound of the splash that the corpse soon made as it struck the sea ; not so quick, indeed, but that some of the flying bubbles might have sprinkled her hull with their ghostly baptism.

As Ahab now glided from the dejected *Delight*, the strange life-buoy hanging at the *Pequod*’s stern came into conspicuous relief.

‘Ha ! yonder ! look yonder, men !’ cried a foreboding voice in her wake. ‘In vain, oh, ye strangers, ye fly our sad burial ; ye but turn us your taffrail to show us your coffin !’



## CHAPTER LXIX

### THE SYMPHONY

It was a clear steel-blue day. The firmaments of air and sea were hardly separable in that all pervading azure ; only, the pensive air was transparently pure and soft, with a woman's look, and the robust and man-like sea heaved with long, strong, lingering swells, as Samson's chest in his sleep.

Tied up and twisted ; gnarled and knotted with wrinkles ; haggardly firm and unyielding ; his eyes glowing like coals, that still glow in the ashes of ruin ; untottering Ahab stood forth in the clearness of the morn ; lifting his splintered helmet of a brow to the fair girl's forehead of heaven.

Slowly crossing the deck from the scuttle, Ahab leaned over the side, and watched how his shadow in the water sank and sank to his gaze, the more and the more that he strove to pierce the profundity. But the lovely aromas in that enchanted air did at last seem to dispell, for a moment, the cankerous thing in his soul. That glad, happy air, that winsome sky, did at last stroke and caress him ; the step-mother world, so long cruel — forbidding — now threw affectionate arms round his stubborn neck, and did seem to joyously sob over him, as if over one, that however wilful and erring, she could yet find it in her heart to save and to bless. From beneath his slouched hat Ahab dropped a tear into the sea ; nor



did all the Pacific contain such wealth as that one wee drop.

Starbuck saw the old man ; saw him, how he heavily leaned over the side ; and he seemed to hear in his own true heart the measureless sobbing that stole out of the centre of the serenity around. Careful not to touch him, or be noticed by him, he yet drew near to him, and stood there.

Ahab turned.

‘Starbuck !’

‘Sir.’

‘Oh, Starbuck ! it is a mild, mild wind, and a mild looking sky. On such a day — very much such a sweetness as this — I struck my first whale — a boy-harpooneer of eighteen ! Forty — forty — forty years ago ! — ago ! Forty years of continual whaling ! forty years of privation, and peril, and storm-time ! forty years on the pitiless sea ! for forty years has Ahab forsaken the peaceful land, for forty years to make war on the horrors of the deep ! Aye and yes, Starbuck, out of those forty years I have not spent three ashore. When I think of this life I have led ; the desolation of solitude it has been ; the masoned, walled-town of a Captain’s exclusiveness, which admits but small entrance to any sympathy from the green country without — oh, weariness ! heaviness ! Guinea-coast slavery of solitary command ! — when I think of all this ; only half-suspected, not so keenly known to me before — and how for forty years I have fed upon dry salted fare — fit emblem of the dry nourishment of my soul ! — when the poorest landsman has had fresh fruit to his daily hand, and broken the world’s fresh bread to my mouldy crusts — away, whole oceans away, from that young girl-wife I wedded past fifty, and sailed for Cape Horn the next day,



— wife? wife? — rather a widow with her husband alive! Aye, I widowed that poor girl when I married her, Starbuck; and then, the madness, the frenzy, the boiling blood and the smoking brow, with which, for a thousand lowerings old Ahab has furiously, foamingly chased his prey — more a demon than a man! — aye, aye! what a forty years' fool — fool — old fool, has old Ahab been! Why the strife of the chase? why weary, and palsy the arm at the oar, and the iron, and the lance? how the richer or better is Ahab now? Behold. Oh, Starbuck! is it not hard, that with this weary load I bear, one poor leg should have been snatched from under me? Here, brush this old hair aside; it blinds me, that I seem to weep. Locks so grey did never grow but from out some ashes! But do I look very old, so very, very old, Starbuck? I feel deadly faint, bowed, and humped, as though I were Adam, staggering beneath the piled centuries since Paradise. God! God! God! — crack my heart! — stave my brain! — mockery! mockery! bitter, biting mockery of grey hairs, have I lived enough joy to wear ye; and seem and feel thus intolerably old? Close! stand close to me, Starbuck; let me look into a human eye; it is better than to gaze into sea or sky; better than to gaze upon God. By the green land; by the bright hearth-stone! this is the magic glass, man; I see my wife and my child in thine eye. No, no; stay on board, on board! — lower not when I do; when branded Ahab gives chase to Moby Dick. That hazard shall not be thine. No, no! not with the far away home I see in that eye!

‘Oh, my Captain! my Captain! noble soul! grand old heart, after all! why should any one give chase to that hated fish! Away with me! let us fly these deadly waters! let us home! Wife and child, too, are Starbuck’s — wife



and child of his brotherly, sisterly, play-fellow youth; even as thine, sir, are the wife and child of thy loving, longing, paternal old age! Away! let us away! — this instant let me alter the course! How cheerily, how hilariously, O my Captain, would we bowl on our way to see old Nantucket again! I think, sir, they have some such mild blue days, even as this, in Nantucket.'

'They have, they have. I have seen them — some summer days in the morning. About this time — yes, it is his noon nap now — the boy vivaciously wakes; sits up in bed; and his mother tells him of me, of cannibal old me; how I am abroad upon the deep, but will yet come back to dance him again.'

'Tis my Mary, my Mary herself! She promised that my boy, every morning, should be carried to the hill to catch the first glimpse of his father's sail! Yes, yes! no more! it is done! we head for Nantucket! Come, my Captain, study out the course, and let us away! See, see! the boy's face from the window! the boy's hand on the hill!

But Ahab's glance was averted; like a blighted fruit tree he shook, and cast his last, cindered apple to the soil.

'What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural lovings and longings, I so keep pushing, and crowding, and jamming myself on all the time; recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare? Is Ahab, Ahab? Is it I, God, or who, that lifts this arm? But if the great sun move not of himself; but is as an errand-boy in heaven; nor one single star can revolve, but by some



invisible power ; how then can this one small heart beat ; this one small brain think thoughts ; unless God does that beating, does that thinking, does that living, and not I. By heaven, man, we are turned round and round in this world, like yonder windlass, and Fate is the handspike. And all the time, lo ! that smiling sky, and this unsounded sea ! Look ! see yon Albicore ! who put it into him to chase and fang that flying-fish ? Where do murderers go, man ! Who's to doom, when the judge himself is dragged to the bar ? But it is a mild, mild wind, and a mild looking sky ; and the air smells now, as if it blew from a far-away meadow ; they have been making hay somewhere under the slopes of the Andes, Starbuck, and the mowers are sleeping among the new-mown hay. Sleeping ? Aye, toil we how we may, we all sleep at last on the field. Sleep ? Aye, and rust amid greenness ; as last year's scythes flung down, and left in the half-cut swaths — Starbuck !

But blanched to a corpse's hue with despair, the Mate had stolen away.

Ahab crossed the deck to gaze over on the other side ; but started at two reflected, fixed eyes in the water there. Fedallah was motionlessly leaning over the same rail.



## CHAPTER LXX

### THE CHASE — FIRST DAY

THAT night, in the mid-watch, when the old man — as his wont at intervals — stepped forth from the scuttle in which he leaned, and went to his pivot-hole, he suddenly thrust out his face fiercely, snuffing up the sea air as a sagacious ship's dog will, in drawing nigh to some barbarous isle. He declared that a whale must be near. Soon that peculiar odor, sometimes to a great distance given forth by the living sperm whale, was palpable to all the watch; nor was any mariner surprised when, after inspecting the compass, and then the dog-vane, and then ascertaining the precise bearing of the odor as nearly as possible, Ahab rapidly ordered the ship's course to be slightly altered, and the sail to be shortened.

The acute policy dictating these movements was sufficiently vindicated at daybreak, by the sight of a long sleek on the sea directly and lengthwise ahead, smooth as oil, and resembling in the pleated watery wrinkles bordering it, the polished metallic-like marks of some swift tide-rip, at the mouth of a deep, rapid stream.

'Man the mast-heads! Call all hands!'

Thundering with the butts of three clubbed handspikes on the forecastle deck, Daggoo roused the sleepers with such judgment claps that they seemed to exhale from the scuttle, so instantaneously did they appear with their clothes in their hands.



'What d'ye see?' cried Ahab, flattening his face to the sky.

'Nothing, nothing, sir!' was the sound hailing down in reply.

'T'gallant sails! — stunsails! alow and aloft, and on both sides!'

All sail being set, he now cast loose the life-line, reserved for swaying him to the main royal-mast head; and in a few moments they were hoisting him thither, when, while but two thirds of the way aloft, and while peering ahead through the horizontal vacancy between the main-top-sail and top-gallant-sail, he raised a gull-like cry in the air, 'There she blows! — there she blows! A hump like a snow-hill! It is Moby Dick!'

Fired by the cry which seemed simultaneously taken up by the three look-outs, the men on deck rushed to the rigging to behold the famous whale they had so long been pursuing. Ahab had now gained his final perch, some feet above the other look-outs, Tashtego standing just beneath him on the cap of the top-gallant-mast, so that the Indian's head was almost on a level with Ahab's heel. From this height the whale was now seen some mile or so ahead, at every roll of the sea revealing his high sparkling hump, and regularly jetting his silent spout into the air. To the credulous mariners it seemed the same silent spout they had so long ago beheld in the moonlit Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

'And did none of ye see it before?' cried Ahab, hailing the perched men all around him.

'I saw him almost that same instant, sir, that Captain Ahab did, and I cried out,' said Tashtego.

'Not the same instant; not the same — no, the doubloon



is mine, Fate reserved the doubloon for me. *I* only; none of ye could have raised the White Whale first. There she blows! there she blows! — there she blows! There again! there again!’ he cried, in long-drawn, lingering, methodic tones, attuned to the gradual prolongings of the whale’s visible jets. ‘He’s going to sound! In stunsails! Down top-gallant-sails! Stand by three boats. Mr. Starbuck, remember, stay on board, and keep the ship. Helm there! Luff, luff a point! So; steady, man, steady! There go flukes! No, no; only black water! All ready the boats there? Stand by, stand by! Lower me, Mr. Starbuck; lower, lower, — quick, quicker!’ and he slid through the air to the deck.

‘He is heading straight to leeward, sir,’ cried Stubb, ‘right away from us; cannot have seen the ship yet.’

‘Be dumb, man! Stand by the braces! Hard down the helm! — brace up! Shiver her! — shiver her! — So; well that! Boats, boats!’

Soon all the boats but Starbuck’s were dropped; all the boat-sails set — all the paddles plying; with rippling swiftness, shooting to leeward; and Ahab heading the onset. A pale, death-glimmer lit up Fedallah’s sunken eyes; a hideous motion gnawed his mouth.

Like noiseless nautilus shells, their light prows sped through the sea; but only slowly they neared the foe. As they neared him, the ocean grew still more smooth; seemed drawing a carpet over its waves; seemed a noon-meadow, so serenely it spread. At length the breathless hunter came so nigh his seemingly unsuspecting prey, that his entire dazzling hump was distinctly visible, sliding along the sea as if an isolated thing, and continually set in a revolving ring of finest, fleecy, greenish foam. He saw



the vast, involved wrinkles of the slightly projecting head beyond. Before it, far out on the soft Turkish-rugged waters, went the glistening white shadow from his broad, milky forehead, a musical rippling playfully accompanying the shade; and behind, the blue waters interchangeably flowed over into the moving valley of his steady wake; and on either hand bright bubbles arose and danced by his side. But these were broken again by the light toes of hundreds of gay fowls softly feathering the sea, alternate with their fitful flight; and like to some flag-staff rising from the painted hull of an argosy, the tall but shattered pole of a recent lance projected from the white whale's back; and at intervals one of the cloud of soft-toed fowls hovering, and to and fro skimming like a canopy over the fish, silently perched and rocked on this pole, the long tail feathers streaming like pennons.

And thus, through the serene tranquillities of the tropical sea, among waves whose handclappings were suspended by exceeding rapture, Moby Dick moved on, still withholding from sight the full terrors of his submerged trunk, entirely hiding the wrenched hideousness of his jaw. But soon the fore part of him slowly rose from the water; for an instant his whole marbleized body formed a high arch, like Virginia's Natural Bridge, and warningly waving his bannered flukes in the air, the grand god revealed himself, sounded, and went out of sight. Hoveringly halting, and dipping on the wing, the white sea-fowls longingly lingered over the agitated pool that he left.

With oars apeak, and paddles down, the sheets of their sails adrift, the three boats now stilly floated, awaiting Moby Dick's reappearance.



‘An hour,’ said Ahab standing rooted in his boat’s stern; and he gazed beyond the whale’s place, towards the dim blue spaces and wide wooing vacancies to leeward. It was only an instant; for again his eyes seemed whirling round in his head as he swept the watery circle. The breeze now freshened; the sea began to swell.

‘The birds! — the birds!’ cried Tashtego.

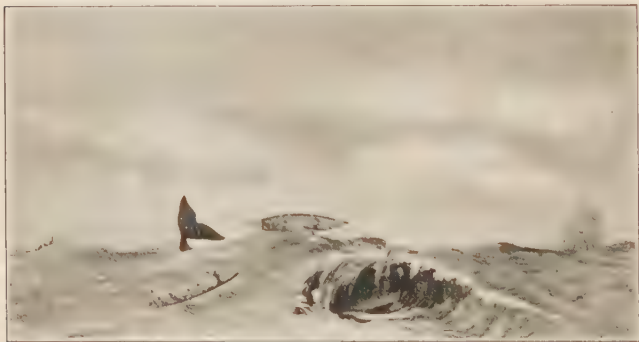
In long Indian file, as when herons take wing, the white birds were now all flying towards Ahab’s boat; and when within a few yards began fluttering over the water there, wheeling round and round, with joyous, expectant cries. Their vision was keener than man’s; Ahab could discover no sign in the sea. But suddenly as he peered down and down into its depths, he profoundly saw a white living spot no bigger than a white weasel, with wonderful celerity uprising, and magnifying as it rose, till it turned, and then there were plainly revealed two long crooked rows of white, glistening teeth, floating up from the undiscoverable bottom. It was Moby Dick’s open mouth and scrolled jaw; his vast, shadowed bulk still half blending with the blue of the sea. The glittering mouth yawned beneath the boat like an open-doored marble tomb; and giving one sidelong sweep with his steering oar, Ahab whirled the craft aside from this tremendous apparition. Then, calling upon Fedallah to change places with him, went forward to the bows, and seizing Perth’s harpoon, commanded his crew to grasp their oars and stand by to stern.

Now, by reason of this timely spinning round the boat upon its axis, its bow, by anticipation, was made to face the whale’s head while yet under water. But as if perceiving this stratagem, Moby Dick, with that malicious intelligence ascribed to him, sidelingly transplanted himself, as



it were, in an instant, shooting his pleated head lengthwise beneath the boat.

Through and through; through every plank and each rib, it thrilled for an instant, the whale obliquely lying on his back, in the manner of a biting shark, slowly and feelingly taking its bows full within his mouth, so that the long, narrow, scrolled lower jaw curled high up into the open air, and one of the teeth caught in a row-lock. The



AN ENCOUNTER WITH A BULL SPERM WHALE

In the final struggle one boat is capsized by a blow from the whale's head and is thrown high in the air.

bluish pearl-white of the inside of the jaw was within six inches of Ahab's head, and reached higher than that. In this attitude the White Whale now shook the slight cedar as a mildly cruel cat her mouse. With unastonished eyes Fedallah gazed, and crossed his arms; but the tiger-yellow crew were tumbling over each other's heads to gain the uttermost stern.

And now, while both elastic gunwales were springing in and out, as the whale dallied with the doomed craft in this



devilish way ; and from his body being submerged beneath the boat, he could not be darted at from the bows, for the bows were almost inside of him, as it were ; and while the other boats involuntarily paused, as before a quick crisis impossible to withstand, then it was that monomaniac Ahab, furious with this tantalizing vicinity of his foe, which placed him all alive and helpless in the very jaws he hated ; frenzied with all this, he seized the long bone with his naked hands, and wildly strove to wrench it from its gripe. As now he thus vainly strove, the jaw slipped from him ; the frail gunwales bent in, collapsed, and snapped, as both jaws, like an enormous shears, sliding further aft, bit the craft completely in twain, and locked themselves fast again in the sea, midway between the two floating wrecks. These floated aside, the broken ends drooping, the crew at the stern-wreck clinging to the gunwales, and striving to hold fast to the oars to lash them across.

At that preluding moment, ere the boat was yet snapped, Ahab, the first to perceive the whale's intent, by the crafty upraising of his head, a movement that loosed his hold for the time ; at that moment his hand had made one final effort to push the boat out of the bite. But only slipping further into the whale's mouth, and tilting over sideways as it slipped, the boat had shaken off his hold on the jaw ; spilled him out of it, as he leaned to the push ; and so he fell flat-faced upon the sea.

Meanwhile Ahab half smothered in the foam of the whale's insolent tail, and too much of a cripple to swim, — though he could still keep afloat, even in the heart of such a whirlpool as that ; helpless Ahab's head was seen, like a tossed bubble which the least chance shock might burst. From the boat's fragmentary stern, Fedallah incuriously



and mildly eyed him ; the clinging crew, at the other drifting end, could not succor him ; more than enough was it for them to look to themselves. For so revolvingly appalling was the White Whale's aspect, and so planetarily swift the ever-contracting circles he made, that he seemed horizontally swooping upon them. And though the other boats, unharmed, still hovered hard by ; still they dared not pull into the eddy to strike, lest that should be the signal for the instant destruction of the jeopardized castaways, Ahab and all ; nor in that case could they themselves hope to escape. With straining eyes, then, they remained on the outer edge of the direful zone, whose centre had now become the old man's head.

Meantime, from the beginning all this had been descried from the ship's mast heads ; and squaring her yards, she had borne down upon the scene ; and was now so nigh, that Ahab in the water hailed her ; — 'Sail on the' — but that moment a breaking sea dashed on him from Moby Dick, and whelmed him for the time. But struggling out of it again, and chancing to rise on a towering crest, he shouted, — 'Sail on the whale ! — Drive him off !'

The *Pequod's* prows were pointed ; and breaking up the charmed circle, she effectually parted the White Whale from his victim. As he sullenly swam off, the boats flew to the rescue.

Dragged into Stubb's boat with blood-shot, blinded eyes, the white brine caking in his wrinkles ; the long tension of Ahab's bodily strength did crack, and helplessly he yielded to his body's doom for a time, lying all crushed in the bottom of Stubb's boat, like one trodden under foot of herds of elephants. Far inland, nameless wails came from him, as desolate sounds from out ravines.



‘The harpoon,’ said Ahab, half way rising, and draggingly leaning on one bended arm — ‘is it safe?’

‘Aye, sir, for it was not darted; this is it,’ said Stubb, showing it.

‘Lay it before me; — any missing men?’

‘One, two, three, four, five; — there were five oars, sir, and here are five men.’

‘That’s good. — Help me, man; I wish to stand. So, so, I see him! there! there! going to leeward still; what a leaping spout! — Hands off from me! The eternal sap runs up in Ahab’s bones again! Set the sail; out oars; the helm!’

It is often the case that when a boat is stove, its crew, being picked up by another boat, help to work that second boat; and the chase is thus continued with what is called double-banked oars. It was thus now. But the added power of the boat did not equal the added power of the whale, for he seemed to have treble-banked his every fin; swimming with a velocity which plainly showed, that if now, under these circumstances, pushed on, the chase would prove an indefinitely prolonged, if not a hopeless one; nor could any crew endure for so long a period, such an unintermitted, intense straining at the oar; a thing barely tolerable only in some one brief vicissitude. The ship itself, then, as it sometimes happens, offered the most promising intermediate means of overtaking the chase, accordingly, the boats now made ready for her, and were soon swayed up to their cranes — the two parts of the wrecked boats having been previously secured by her — and then hoisting everything to her side, and stacking her canvas high up, and sideways outstretching it with stunsails, like the double-jointed wings of an albatross; the



*Pequod* bore down in the leeward wake of *Moby Dick*. At the well known, methodic intervals, the whale's glittering spout was regularly announced from the manned mast-heads; and when he would be reported as just gone down, Ahab would take the time, and then pacing the deck, binnacle-watch in hand, so soon as the last second of the allotted hour expired, his voice was heard. — 'Whose is the doubloon now? D'ye see him?' and if the reply was No, sir! straightway he commanded them to lift him to his perch. In this way the day wore on; Ahab, now aloft and motionless; anon, unrestingly pacing the planks.

As he was thus walking, uttering no sound, except to hail the men aloft, or to bid them hoist a sail still higher, or to spread one to a still greater breadth — thus to and fro pacing, beneath his slouched hat, at every turn he passed his own wrecked boat, which had been dropped upon the quarter-deck, and lay there reversed; broken bow to shattered stern. At last he paused before it; and as in an already over-clouded sky fresh troops of clouds will sometimes sail across, so over the old man's face there now stole some such added gloom as this.

Stubb saw him pause; and perhaps intending, not vainly, though, to evince his own unabated fortitude, and thus keep up a valiant place in his Captain's mind, he advanced, and eyeing the wreck exclaimed — 'The thistle the ass refused; it pricked his mouth too keenly, sir, ha! ha!'

'What soulless thing is this that laughs before a wreck? Man, man! did I not know thee brave as fearless fire (and as mechanical) I could swear thou wert a poltroon. Groan nor laugh should be heard before a wreck.'



‘Aye, sir,’ said Starbuck drawing near, ‘’tis a solemn sight; an omen, and an ill one.’

‘Omen? omen? — the dictionary! If the gods think to speak outright to man, they will honorably speak outright; not shake their heads, and give an old wives’ darkling hint. — Begone! Ye two are the opposite poles of one thing; Starbuck is Stubb reversed, and Stubb is Starbuck; and ye two are all mankind; and Ahab stands alone among the millions of the peopled earth, nor gods nor men his neighbors! Cold, cold — I shiver! — How now? Aloft there! D’ye see him? Sing out for every spout, though he spout ten times a second!’

The day was nearly done; only the hem of his golden robe was rustling. Soon it was almost dark, but the look-out men still remained unset.

‘Can’t see the spout now, sir; — too dark’ — cried a voice from the air.

‘How heading when last seen?’

‘As before, sir, — straight to leeward.’

‘Good! he will travel slower now ’tis night. Down royals and top-gallant stun-sails, Mr. Starbuck. We must not run over him before morning; he’s making a passage now, and may heave-to a while. Helm there! keep her full before the wind! — Aloft! come down! — Mr. Stubb, send a fresh hand to the fore-mast head, and see it manned till morning.’ — Then advancing towards the doubloon in the main-mast — ‘Men, this gold is mine, for I earned it; but I shall let it abide here till the White Whale is dead; and then, whosoever of ye first raises him, upon the day he shall be killed, this gold is that man’s; and if on that day I shall again raise him, then, ten times



its sum shall be divided among all of ye! Away now! the deck is thine, sir.'

And so saying, he placed himself half way within the scuttle, and slouching his hat, stood there till dawn, except when at intervals rousing himself to see how the night wore on.



## CHAPTER LXXI

### THE CHASE — SECOND DAY

AT day-break, the three mast-heads were punctually manned afresh.

‘D’ye see him?’ cried Ahab, after allowing a little space for the light to spread.

‘See nothing, sir.’

‘Turn up all hands and make sail! he travels faster than I thought for; — the top-gallant sails! — aye, they should have been kept on her all night. But no matter — ’tis but resting for the rush.’

Here be it said, that this pertinacious pursuit of one particular whale, continued through day into night, and through night into day, is a thing by no means unprecedented in the South sea fishery. For such is the wonderful skill, prescience of experience, and invincible confidence acquired by some great natural geniuses among the Nantucket commanders; that from the simple observation of a whale when last descried, they will, under certain given circumstances, pretty accurately foretell both the direction in which he will continue to swim for a time, while out of sight, as well as his probable rate of progression during that period.

The ship tore on; leaving such a furrow in the sea as when a cannon-ball, missent, becomes a plough-share and turns up the level field.

‘By salt and hemp!’ cried Stubb, ‘but this swift motion



of the deck creeps up one's legs and tingles at the heart. This ship and I are two brave fellows! — Ha! ha! Some one take me up, and launch me, spine-wise, on the sea, — for by live-oaks! my spine's a keel. Ha, ha! we go the gait that leaves no dust behind!

'There she blows — she blows! — she blows! — right ahead!' was now the mast-head cry.

'Aye, aye!' cried Stubb, 'I knew it — ye can't escape — blow on and split your spout, O whale! the mad fiend himself is after ye! blow your trump — blister your lungs! — Ahab will dam off your blood, as a miller shuts his water-gate upon the stream!'

And Stubb did but speak out for well nigh all that crew. They were one man, not thirty. For as the one ship that held them all; though it was put together of all contrasting things — oak, and maple, and pine wood; iron, and pitch, and hemp — yet all these ran into each other in the one concrete hull, which shot on its way, both balanced and directed by the long central keel; even so, all the individualities of the crew, this man's valor, that man's fear; guilt and guiltiness, all varieties were welded into oneness, and were all directed to that fatal goal which Ahab their one lord and keel did point to.

The rigging lived. The mast-heads, like the tops of tall palms, were outspreadingly tufted with arms and legs. Clinging to a spar with one hand, some reached forth the other with impatient wavings; others, shading their eyes from the vivid sunlight, sat far out on the rocking yards; all the spars in full bearing of mortals, ready and ripe for their fate. Ah! how they still strove through that infinite blueness to seek out the thing that might destroy them!



‘Why sing ye not out for him, if ye see him?’ cried Ahab, when, after the lapse of some minutes since the first cry, no more had been heard. ‘Sway me up, men; ye have been deceived; not Moby Dick casts one odd jet that way, and then disappears.’

It was even so; in their headlong eagerness, the men had mistaken some other thing for the whale-spout, as the event itself soon proved; for hardly had Ahab reached his perch; hardly was the rope belayed to its pin on deck, when he struck the key-note to an orchestra, that made the air vibrate as with the combined discharges of rifles. The triumphant halloo of thirty buckskin lungs was heard, as — much nearer to the ship than the place of the imaginary jet, less than a mile ahead — Moby Dick bodily burst into view! For not by any calm and indolent spoutings; not by the peaceable gush of that mystic fountain in his head, did the White Whale now reveal his vicinity; but by the far more wondrous phenomenon of breaching. Rising with his utmost velocity from the furthest depths, the Sperm Whale thus booms his entire bulk into the pure element of air, and piling up a mountain of dazzling foam, shows his place to the distance of seven miles and more. In those moments, the torn, enraged waves he shakes off, seem his mane; in some cases, this breaching is his act of defiance.

‘There she breaches! there she breaches!’ was the cry, as in his immeasurable bravadoes the White Whale tossed himself salmon-like to Heaven. So suddenly seen in the blue plain of the sea, and relieved against the still bluer margin of the sky, the spray that he raised, for the moment, intolerably glittered and glared like a glacier; and stood there gradually fading and fading away from its first



sparkling intensity, to the dim mistiness of an advancing shower in a vale.

‘Aye, breach your last to the sun, Moby Dick!’ cried Ahab, ‘thy hour and thy harpoon are at hand! — Down! down all of ye, but one man at the fore. The boats! — stand by!’

Unmindful of the tedious rope-ladders of the shrouds, the men, like shooting stars, slid to the deck, by the isolated backstays and halyards; while Ahab, less dartingly, but still rapidly was dropped from his perch.

‘Lower away,’ he cried, so soon as he had reached his boat — a spare one, rigged the afternoon previous. ‘Mr. Starbuck, the ship is thine — keep away from the boats, but keep near them. Lower, all!’

As if to strike a quick terror into them, by this time being the first assailant himself, Moby Dick had turned, and was now coming for the three crews. Ahab’s boat was central; and cheering his men, he told them he would take the whale head-and-head, — that is, pull straight up to his forehead, — a not uncommon thing; for when within a certain limit, such a course excludes the coming onset from the whale’s sidelong vision. But ere that close limit was gained, and while yet all three boats were plain as the ship’s three masts to his eye; the White Whale churning himself into furious speed, almost in an instant as it were, rushing among the boats with open jaws, and a lashing tail, offered appalling battle on every side; and heedless of the irons darted at him from every boat, seemed only intent on annihilating each separate plank of which those boats were made. But skilfully manœuvred, incessantly wheeling like trained chargers in the field; the boats for a while eluded him; though, at times, but by a plank’s breadth;



while all the time, Ahab's unearthly slogan tore every other cry but his to shreds.

But at last in his untraceable evolutions, the White Whale so crossed and recrossed, and in a thousand ways entangled the slack of the three lines now fast to him, that they foreshortened, and, of themselves, warped the devoted boats towards the planted irons in him; though



WHALE FISHING

From a French aquatint, after Garneray, published about 1850.

now for a moment the whale drew aside a little, as if to rally for a more tremendous charge. Seizing that opportunity, Ahab first paid out more line: and then was rapidly hauling and jerking in upon it again — hoping that way to disencumber it of some snarls — when lo! — a sight more savage than the embattled teeth of sharks!

Caught and twisted — corkscrewed in the mazes of the line, loose harpoons and lances, with all their bristling



barbs and points, came flashing and dripping up to the chocks in the bows of Ahab's boat. Only one thing could be done. Seizing the boat-knife, he critically reached within — through — and then, without — the rays of steel; dragged in the line beyond, passed it, inboard, to the bowsman, and then, twice sundering the rope near the chocks — dropped the intercepted fagot of steel into the sea; and was all fast again. That instant, the White Whale made a sudden rush among the remaining tangles of the other lines; by so doing, irresistibly dragged the more involved boats of Stubb and Flask towards his flukes; dashed them together like two rolling husks on a surf-beaten beach, and then, diving down into the sea, disappeared in a boiling maelstrom, in which, for a space, the odorous cedar chips of the wrecks danced round and round, like the grated nutmeg in a swiftly stirred bowl of punch.

While the two crews were yet circling in the waters, reaching out after the revolving line-tubs, oars, and other floating furniture, while aslope little Flask bobbed up and down like an empty vial, twitching his legs upwards to escape the dreaded jaws of sharks; and Stubb was lustily singing out for some one to ladle him up; and while the old man's line — now parting — admitted of his pulling into the creamy pool to rescue whom he could; — in that wild simultaneousness of a thousand concreted perils, — Ahab's yet unstricken boat seemed drawn up towards Heaven by invisible wires, — as, arrow-like, shooting perpendicularly from the sea, the White Whale dashed his broad forehead against its bottom, and sent it, turning over and over, into the air; till it fell again — gunwale downwards — and Ahab and his



men struggled out from under it, like seals from a sea-side cave.

The first uprising momentum of the whale — modifying its direction as he struck the surface — involuntarily launched him along it, to a little distance from the centre of the destruction he had made ; and with his back to it, he now lay for a moment slowly feeling with his flukes from side to side ; and when ever a stray oar, bit of plank, the least chip or crumb of the boats touched his skin, his tail swiftly drew back, and came sideways smiting the sea. But soon, as if satisfied that his work for that time was done, he pushed his pleated forehead through the ocean, and trailing after him the intertangled lines, continued his leeward way at a traveller's methodic pace.

As before, the attentive ship having descried the whole fight, again came bearing down to the rescue, and dropping a boat, picked up the floating mariners, tubs, oars, and whatever else could be caught at, and safely landed them on her decks. Some sprained shoulders, wrists, and ankles ; livid contusions ; wrenched harpoons and lances ; inextricable intricacies of rope ; shattered oars and planks ; all these were there ; but no fatal or even serious ill seemed to have befallen any one. As with Fedallah the day before, so Ahab was now found grimly clinging to his boat's broken half, which afforded a comparatively easy float ; nor did it so exhaust him as the previous day's mishap.

But when he was helped to the deck, all eyes were fastened upon him ; as instead of standing by himself he still half-hung upon the shoulder of Starbuck, who had thus far been the foremost to assist him. His ivory leg had been snapped off, leaving but one short sharp splinter.

'Aye, aye, Starbuck, 'tis sweet to lean sometimes, be the



leaner who he will; and would old Ahab had leaned oftener than he has.'

'The ferrule has not stood, sir,' said the carpenter, now coming up; 'I put good work into that leg.'

'But no bones broken, sir, I hope,' said Stubb with true concern.

'Aye! and all splintered to pieces, Stubb! — d'ye see it. — But even with a broken bone, old Ahab is untouched; and I account no living bone of mine one jot more me, than this dead one that's lost. Nor white whale, nor man, nor fiend, can so much as graze old Ahab in his own proper and inaccessible being. Can any lead touch yonder floor, any mast scrape yonder roof? — Aloft there! which way?'

'Dead to leeward, sir.'

'Up helm, then; pile on the sail again, ship keepers! down the rest of the spare boats and rig them — Mr. Starbuck away, and muster the boat's crews.'

'Let me first help thee towards the bulwarks, sir.'

'Oh, oh, oh! how this splinter gores me now! Accursed fate! that the unconquerable captain in the soul should have such a craven mate!'

'Sir?'

'My body, man, not thee. Give me something for a cane — there, that shivered lance will do. Muster the men. Surely I have not seen him yet. By heaven it cannot be! — missing? — quick! call them all.'

The old man's hinted thought was true. Upon mustering the company, the Parsee was not there.

'The Parsee!' cried Stubb — 'he must have been caught in —'

'The black vomit wrench thee! — run all of ye above, aloft, cabin, forecastle — find him — not gone — not gone!'



But quickly they returned to him with the tidings that the Parsee was nowhere to be found.

‘Aye, sir,’ said Stubb — ‘caught among the tangles of your line — I thought I saw him dragging under.’

‘*My* line! *my* line? Gone? — gone? What means that little word? — What death-knell rings in it, that old Ahab shakes as if he were the belfry. The harpoon, too! — toss over the litter there, — d’ye see it? — the forged iron, men, the White Whale’s — no, no, no, — blistered fool! this hand did dart it! — ’tis in the fish! — Aloft there! Keep him nailed — Quick! — all hands to the rigging of the boats — collect the oars — harpooneers! the irons, the irons! — hoist the royals higher — a pull on all the sheets! — helm there! steady, steady for your life! I’ll ten times girdle the unmeasured globe; yea and dive straight through it, but I’ll slay him yet!’

‘Great God! but for one single instant show thyself,’ cried Starbuck; ‘never, never wilt thou capture him, old man — no more of this, that’s worse than devil’s madness. Two days chased; twice stove to splinters; thy very leg once more snatched from under thee; thy evil shadow gone — all good angels mobbing thee with warnings: — what more wouldst thou have? — Shall we keep chasing this murderous fish till he swamps the last man? Shall we be dragged by him to the bottom of the sea? Shall we be towed by him to the infernal world? Oh, oh, — Impiety and blasphemy to hunt him more!’

‘Starbuck, of late I’ve felt strangely moved to thee; ever since that hour we both saw — thou know’st what, in one another’s eyes. But in this matter of the whale, be the front of thy face to me as the palm of this hand — a lipless, unfeatured blank. Ahab is for ever Ahab, man.



This whole act's immutably decreed. 'Twas rehearsed by thee and me a billion years before this ocean rolled. Fool! I am the Fates' lieutenant; I act under orders. Look thou, underling! that thou obeyest mine. — Stand round me, men. Ye see an old man cut down to the stump; leaning on a shivered lance; propped up on a lonely foot. 'Tis Ahab — his body's part; but Ahab's soul's a centipede, that moves upon a hundred legs. I feel strained, half-stranded, as ropes that tow dismasted frigates in a gale; and I may look so. But ere I break, ye'll hear me crack; and till ye hear *that*, know that Ahab's hawser tows his purpose yet. Believe ye, men, in the things called omens? Then laugh aloud, and cry encore! For ere they drown, drowning things will twice rise to the surface; then rise again, to sink for evermore. So with Moby Dick — two days he's floated — to-morrow will be the third. Aye, men, he'll rise once more, — but only to spout his last! D'ye feel brave men, brave?

'As fearless fire,' cried Stubb.

'And as mechanical,' muttered Ahab. Then as the men went forward, he muttered on: 'The things called omens! And yesterday I talked the same to Starbuck there, concerning my broken boat. Oh! how valiantly I seek to drive out of others' hearts what's clinched so fast in mine! — 'The Parsee — the Parsee! — gone, gone? and he was to go before! — but still was to be seen again ere I could perish — How's that? — There's a riddle now might baffle all the lawyers backed by the ghosts of the whole line of judges: — like a hawk's beak it pecks my brain. *I'll, I'll* solve it, though!'

When dusk descended, the whale was still in sight to leeward.



So once more the sail was shortened, and everything passed nearly as on the previous night ; only, the sound of hammers, and the hum of the grindstone was heard till nearly daylight, as the men toiled by lanterns in the complete and careful rigging of the spare boats and sharpening their fresh weapons for the morrow. Meantime, of the broken keel of Ahab's wrecked craft the carpenter made him another leg ; while still as on the night before, slouched Ahab stood fixed within his scuttle.



## CHAPTER LXXII

### THE CHASE — THIRD DAY

THE morning of the third day dawned fair and fresh, and once more the solitary night-man at the fore-mast-head was relieved by crowds of the daylight look-outs, who dotted every mast and almost every spar.

‘D’ye see him?’ cried Ahab.

‘Nothing, sir.’

‘Nothing! and noon at hand! The doubloon goes a-begging! See the sun! Aye, aye, it must be so. I’ve oversailed him. How, got the start? Aye, he’s chasing *me* now; not I, *him* — that’s bad; I might have known it, too. Fool! the lines — the harpoons he’s towing. Aye, aye, I have run him by last night. About! about! Come down, all of ye, but the regular look-outs! Man the braces!’

Steering as she had done, the wind had been somewhat on the *Pequod’s* quarter, so that now being pointed in the reverse direction, the braced ship sailed hard upon the breeze as she recharged the cream in her own white wake.

‘Against the wind he now steers for the open jaw,’ murmured Starbuck to himself, as he coiled the new-hauled main-brace upon the rail. ‘God keep us, but already my bones feel damp within me, and from the inside wet my flesh. I misdoubt me that I disobey my God in obeying him!’



‘Stand by to sway me up!’ cried Ahab, advancing to the hempen basket. ‘We should meet him soon.’

‘Aye, aye, sir,’ and straightway Starbuck did Ahab’s bidding, and once more Ahab swung on high.

A whole hour now passed; gold-beaten out to ages. Time itself now held long breaths with keen suspense. But at last, some three points off the weather bow, Ahab descried the spout again, and instantly from the three mast-heads three shrieks went up as if the tongues of fire had voiced it.

‘Forehead to forehead I meet thee, this third time, Moby Dick! On deck there! — brace sharper up; crowd her into the wind’s eye. He’s too far off to lower yet, Mr. Starbuck. The sails shake! Stand over that helmsman with a top-maul! So, so; he travels fast, and I must down. But let me have one more good round look aloft here at the sea; there’s time for that. An old, old sight, and yet somehow so young; aye, and not changed a wink since I first saw it, a boy, from the sand-hills of Nantucket! The same! — the same! — the same to Noah as to me. There’s a soft shower to leeward. Such lovely leewardings! They must lead somewhere — to something else than common land, more palmy than the palms. Leeward! the White Whale goes that way; look to windward, then; the better if the bitterer quarter. But good bye, good bye, old mast-head! What’s this? — green? aye, tiny mosses in these warped cracks. No such green weather stains on Ahab’s head! There’s the difference now between man’s old age and matter’s. But aye, old mast, we both grow old together; sound in our hulls, though, are we not, my ship? Aye, minus a leg, that’s all. By heaven this deadwood has the better of my



live flesh every way. I can't compare with it; and I've known some ships made of dead trees outlast the lives of men made of the most vital stuff of vital fathers. What's that he said? he should still go before me, my pilot; and yet to be seen again? But where? Will I have eyes at the bottom of the sea, supposing I descend those endless stairs? and all night I've been sailing from him, wherever he did sink to. Aye, aye, like many more thou told'st direful truth as touching thyself, O Parsee; but, Ahab, there thy shot fell short. Good bye, mast-head — keep a good eye upon the whale, the while I'm gone. We'll talk to-morrow, nay, to-night, when the White Whale lies down there, tied by head and tail.'

He gave the word; and still gazing round him, was steadily lowered through the cloven blue air to the deck.

In due time the boats were lowered; but as standing in his shallop's stern, Ahab just hovered upon the point of the descent, he waved to the mate, — who held one of the tackle-ropes on deck — and bade him pause.

'Starbuck!'

'Sir?'

'For the third time my soul's ship starts upon this voyage, Starbuck.'

'Aye, sir, thou wilt have it so.'

'Some ships sail from their ports, and ever afterwards are missing, Starbuck!'

'Truth, sir: saddest truth.'

'Some men die at ebb tide; some at low water; some at the full of the flood; — and I feel now like a billow that's all one crested comb, Starbuck. I am old; — shake hands with me, man.'



Their hands met; their eyes fastened; Starbuck's tears the glue.

'Oh, my captain, my captain! — noble heart — go not — go not! — see, it's a brave man that weeps; how great the agony of the persuasion then!'

'Lower away!' — cried Ahab, tossing the mate's arm from him. 'Stand by the crew!'

In an instant the boat was pulling round close under the stern.

'The sharks! the sharks!' cried a voice from the low cabin-window there; 'O master, my master, come back!'

But Ahab heard nothing; for his own voice was high-lifted then; and the boat leaped on.

Yet the voice spake true; for scarce had he pushed from the ship, when numbers of sharks, seemingly rising from out the dark waters beneath the hull, maliciously snapped at the blades of the oars, every time they dipped in the water; and in this way accompanied the boat with their bites. It is a thing not uncommonly happening to the whale-boats in those swarming seas; the sharks at times apparently following them in the same prescient way that vultures hover over the banners of marching regiments in the east. But these were the first sharks that had been observed by the *Pequod* since the White Whale had been first descried; and whether it was that Ahab's crew were all such tiger-yellow barbarians, and therefore their flesh more musky to the senses of the sharks — a matter sometimes well known to affect them, — however it was, they seemed to follow that one boat without molesting the others.

'Heart of wrought steel!' murmured Starbuck gazing over the side, and following with his eyes the receding



boat — ‘canst thou yet ring boldly to that sight? lowering thy keel among ravening sharks, and followed by them, open-mouthed to the chase; and this the critical third day? — For when three days flow together in one continuous intense pursuit; be sure the first is the morning, the second the noon, and the third the evening and the end of that thing — be that end what it may. Oh! my God! what is this that shoots through me, and leaves me so deadly calm, yet expectant, — fixed at the top of a shudder! Future things swim before me, as in empty outlines and skeletons; all the past is somehow grown dim. Mary, girl! thou fadest in pale glories behind me; boy! I seem to see but thy eyes grown wondrous blue. Strangest problems of life seem clearing; but clouds sweep between — Is my journey’s end coming? My legs feel faint; like his who has footed it all day. Feel thy heart, — beats it yet? Stir thyself, Starbuck! — stave it off — move, move! speak aloud! — Mast head there! See ye my boy’s hand on the hill? — Crazed; — aloft there! — keep thy keenest eye upon the boats: — mark well the whale! — Ho! again! — drive off that hawk! see! he pecks — he tears the vane’ — pointing to the red flag flying at the main-truck — ‘Ha! he soars away with it! — Where’s the old man now? see’st thou that sight, oh Ahab! — shudder, shudder!’

The boats had not gone very far, when by a signal from the mast-heads — a downward pointed arm, Ahab knew that the whale had sounded; but intending to be near him at the next rising, he held on his way a little sideways from the vessel; the becharmed crew maintaining the profoundest silence, as the head-beat waves hammered and hammered against the opposing bow.



‘Drive, drive in your nails, oh ye waves! to their uttermost heads drive them in! ye but strike a thing without a lid; and no coffin and no hearse can be mine: — and hemp only can kill me! Ha! ha!’

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard; a subterraneous hum; and then all held their breaths; as bedraggled with trailing ropes, and harpoons, and lances, a vast form shot lengthwise, but obliquely from the sea. Shrouded in a thin drooping veil of mist, it hovered for a moment in the rainbow-bowed air; and then fell swamping back into the deep. Crushed thirty feet upwards, the waters flashed for an instant like heaps of fountains, then brokenly sank in a shower of flakes, leaving the circling surface creamed like new milk round the marble trunk of the whale.

‘Give way!’ cried Ahab to the oarsmen, and the boats darted forward to the attack; but maddened by yesterday’s fresh irons that corroded in him, Moby Dick seemed combinedly possessed by all the angels that fell from heaven. The wide tiers of welded tendons overspreading his broad white forehead, beneath the transparent skin, looked knitted together; as head on, he came churning his tail among the boats; and once more flailed them apart; spilling out the irons and lances from the two mates’ boats, and dashing in one side of the upper part of their bows, but leaving Ahab’s almost without a scar.

While Daggoo and Queequeg were stopping the strained planks; and as the whale swimming out from them, turned, and showed one entire flank as he shot by them



again; at that moment a quick cry went up. Lashed round and round to the fish's back; pinioned in the turns upon turns in which, during the past night, the whale had reeled the involutions of the lines around him, the half torn body of the Parsee was seen; his sable raiment frayed to shreds; his distended eyes turned full upon old Ahab.

The harpoon dropped from his hand.

'Befooled, befooled!' — drawing in a long lean breath — 'Aye, Parsee! I see thee again. — Aye, and thou goest before; and this, *this* then is the hearse that thou didst promise. But I hold thee to the last letter of thy word. Where is the second hearse? Away, mates, to the ship! those boats are useless now; repair them if ye can in time, and return to me; if not, Ahab is enough to die — Down, men! the first thing that but offers to jump from this boat I stand in, that thing I harpoon. Ye are not other men, but my arms and my legs; and so obey me. — Where's the whale? gone down again?'

But he looked too nigh the boat; for as if bent upon escaping with the corpse he bore, and as if the particular place of the last encounter had been but a stage in his leeward voyage, Moby Dick was now again steadily swimming forward; and had almost passed the ship, — which thus far had been sailing in the contrary direction to him, though for the present her headway had been stopped. He seemed swimming with his utmost velocity, and now only intent upon pursuing his own straight path in the sea.

'Oh! Ahab,' cried Starbuck, 'not too late is it, even now, the third day, to desist. See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly seekest him!'

Setting sail to the rising wind, the lonely boat was



swiftly impelled to leeward, by both oars and canvas. And at last when Ahab was sliding by the vessel, so near as plainly to distinguish Starbuck's face as he leaned over the rail, he hailed him to turn the vessel about, and follow him, not too swiftly, at a judicious interval. Glancing upwards he saw Tashtego, Queequeg, and Daggoo, eagerly mounting to the three mast-heads; while the oarsmen were rocking in the two staved boats which had just been hoisted to the side, and were busily at work in repairing them. One after the other, through the port-holes, as he sped, he also caught flying glimpses of Stubb and Flask, busying themselves on deck among bundles of new irons and lances. As he saw all this; as he heard the hammers in the broken boats; far other hammers seemed driving a nail into his heart. But he rallied. And now marking that the vane or flag was gone from the main-mast-head, he shouted to Tashtego, who had just gained that perch, to descend again for another flag, and a hammer and nails, and so nail it to the mast.

Whether fagged by the three days' running chase, and the resistance to his swimming in the knotted hamper he bore; or whether it was some latent deceitfulness and malice in him: whichever was true, the White Whale's way now began to abate, as it seemed, from the boat so rapidly nearing him once more; though indeed the whale's last start had not been so long a one as before. And still as Ahab glided over the waves the un pitying sharks accompanied him; and so pertinaciously stuck to the boat; and so continually bit at the plying oars, that the blades became jagged and crunched, and left small splinters in the sea, at almost every dip.

'Heed them not! those teeth but give new rowlocks to



your oars. Pull on! 'tis the better rest, the shark's jaw than the yielding water.'

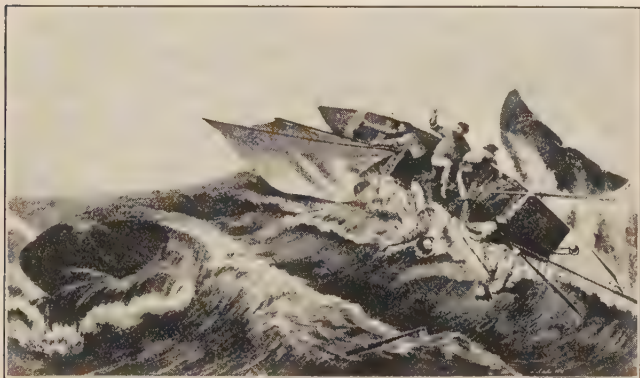
'But at every bite, sir, the thin blades grow smaller and smaller!'

'They will last long enough! pull on! — But who can tell' — he muttered — 'whether these sharks swim to feast on the whale or on Ahab? But pull on! Aye, all alive, now — we near him. The helm! take the helm! let me pass,' — and so saying, two of the oarsmen helped him forward to the bows of the still flying boat.

At length as the craft was cast to one side, and ran ranging along with the White Whale's flank, he seemed strangely oblivious of its advance — as the whale sometimes will — and Ahab was fairly within the smoky mountain mist, which, thrown off from the whale's spout, curled round his great Monadnock hump; he was even thus close to him; when, with body arched back, and both arms lengthwise high-lifted to the poise, he darted his fierce iron, and his far fiercer curse into the hated whale. As both steel and curse sank to the socket, as if sucked into a morass, Moby Dick sideways writhed; spasmodically rolled his nigh flank against the bow, and, without staving a hole in it, so suddenly canted the boat over, that had it not been for the elevated part of the gunwale to which he then clung, Ahab would once more have been tossed into the sea. As it was, three of the oarsmen — who foreknew not the precise instant of the dart, and were therefore unprepared for its effects — these were flung out; but so fell, that, in an instant two of them clutched the gunwale again, and rising to its level on a combing wave, hurled themselves bodily inboard again; the third man helplessly dropping astern, but still afloat and swimming.



Almost simultaneously, with a mighty volition of ungraduated, instantaneous swiftness, the White Whale darted through the weltering sea. But when Ahab cried out to the steersman to take new turns with the line, and hold it so; and commanded the crew to turn round on their seats, and tow the boat up to the mark; the moment



THE CONFLICT

From a lithograph by Prang and Mayer, Boston.

the treacherous line felt that double strain and tug, it snapped in the empty air!

‘What breaks in me? Some sinew cracks! — ’tis whole again; oars! oars! Burst in upon him!’

Hearing the tremendous rush of the sea-crashing boat, the whale wheeled round to present his blank forehead at bay; but in that evolution, catching sight of the nearing black hull of the ship; seemingly seeing in it the source of all his persecutions; bethinking it — it may be — a larger and nobler foe; of a sudden, he bore down upon its



advancing prow, smiting his jaws amid fiery showers of foam.

Ahab staggered; his hand smote his forehead. 'I grow blind; hands! stretch out before me that I may yet grope my way. Is't night?'

'The whale! The ship!' cried the cringing oarsmen.

'Oars! oars! Slope downwards to thy depths, O sea, that ere it be for ever too late, Ahab may slide this last, last time upon his mark! I see: the ship! the ship! Dash on, my men! will ye not save my ship?'

But as the oarsmen violently forced their boat through the sledge-hammering seas, the before whale-smitten bow-ends of two planks burst through, and in an instant almost, the temporarily disabled boat lay nearly level with the waves; its half-wading, splashing crew, trying hard to stop the gap and bale out the pouring water.

Meantime, for that one beholding instant, Tashtego's mast-head hammer remained suspended in his hand; and the red flag, half wrapping him as with a plaid, then streamed itself straight out from him, as his own forward-flowing heart; while Starbuck and Stubb, standing upon the bowsprit beneath, caught sight of the down-coming monster just as soon as he.

'The whale, the whale! Up helm, up helm! Oh, all ye sweet powers of air, now hug me close! Let not Starbuck die, if die he must, in a woman's fainting fit. Up helm, I say — ye fools, the jaw! the jaw! Is this the end of all my bursting prayers? all my life-long fidelities? Oh, Ahab, Ahab, lo, thy work. Steady! helmsman, steady. Nay, nay! Up helm again! He turns to meet us! Oh, his unappeasable brow drives on towards one, whose duty tells him he cannot depart. My God, stand by me now!'



‘Stand not by me, but stand under me, whoever you are that will now help Stubb; for Stubb, too, sticks here. I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Who ever helped Stubb, or kept Stubb awake, but Stubb’s own unwinking eye? And now poor Stubb goes to bed upon a mattress that is all too soft; would it were stuffed with brushwood! I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Look ye, sun, moon, and stars! I call ye assassins of as good a fellow as ever spouted up his ghost. For all that, I would yet ring glasses with thee, would ye but hand the cup! Oh, oh! oh, oh! thou grinning whale, but there’ll be plenty of gulping soon! Why fly ye not, O Ahab! For me, off shoes and jacket to it; let Stubb die in his drawers! A most mouldy and over salted death, though; — cherries! cherries! cherries! Oh, Flask, for one red cherry ere we die!’

‘Cherries? I only wish that we were where they grow. Oh, Stubb, I hope my poor mother’s drawn my part-pay ere this; if not, few coppers will now come to her, for the voyage is up.’

From the ship’s bows, nearly all the seamen now hung inactive; hammers, bits of plank, lances, and harpoons, mechanically retained in their hands, just as they had darted from their various employments; all their enchanted eyes intent upon the whale, which from side to side strangely vibrating his predestinating head, sent a broad band of overspreading semicircular foam before him as he rushed. Retribution, swift vengeance, eternal malice were in his whole aspect, and spite of all that mortal man could do, the solid white buttress of his forehead smote the ship’s starboard bow, till men and timbers reeled. Some fell flat upon their faces. Like dislodged trucks, the heads of the harpooneers aloft shook on their



bull-like necks. Through the breach, they heard the waters pour, as mountain torrents down a flume.

'The ship! The hearse! — the second hearse!' cried Ahab from the boat; 'its wood could only be American!'

Diving beneath the settling ship, the whale ran quivering along its keel; but turning under water, swiftly shot to the surface again, far off the other bow, but within a few yards of Ahab's boat, where, for a time, he lay quiescent.

'I turn my body from the sun. What ho, Tashtego! let me hear thy hammer. Oh! ye three unsundered spires of mine; thou uncracked keel; and only god-bullied hull; thou firm deck, and haughty helm, and Pole-pointed prow, — death-glorious ship! must ye then perish, and without me? Am I cut off from the last fond pride of meanest shipwrecked captains? Oh, lonely death on lonely life! Oh, now I feel my topmost greatness lies in my topmost grief. Ho, ho! from all your furthest bounds, pour ye now in, ye bold billows of my whole foregone life, and top this one piled comber of my death! Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee. Sink all coffins and all hearses to one common pool! and since neither can be mine, let me then tow to pieces, while still chasing thee, though tied to thee, thou damned whale! *Thus I give up the spear!*

The harpoon was darted; the stricken whale flew forward; with igniting velocity the line ran through the groove; — ran foul. Ahab stooped to clear it; he did clear it; but the flying turn caught him round the neck, and voicelessly as Turkish mutes bowstring their victim,



he was shot out of the boat, ere the crew knew he was gone. Next instant, the heavy eye-splice in the rope's final end flew out of the stark-empty tub, knocked down an oarsman, and smiting the sea, disappeared in its depths.

For an instant, the tranced boat's crew stood still ; then turned. 'The ship? Great God, where is the ship?' Soon they through dim, bewildering mediums saw her sidelong fading phantom, as in the gaseous *Fata Morgana* ; only the uppermost masts out of water ; while fixed by infatuation, or fidelity, or fate, to their once lofty perches, the pagan harpooneers still maintained their sinking look-outs on the sea. And now, concentric circles seized the lone boat itself, and all its crew, and each floating oar, and every lance-pole, and spinning, animate and inanimate, all round and round in one vortex, carried the smallest chip of the *Pequod* out of sight.

But as the last whelmings intermixingly poured themselves over the sunken head of the Indian at the mainmast, leaving a few inches of the erect spar yet visible, together with long streaming yards of the flag, which calmly undulated, with ironical coincidings, over the destroying billows they almost touched ; — at that instant, a red arm and a hammer hovered backwardly uplifted in the open air, in the act of nailing the flag faster and yet faster to the subsiding spar. A sky-hawk that tauntingly had followed the main-truck downwards from its natural home among the stars, pecking at the flag, and incommoding Tashtego there ; this bird now chanced to intercept its broad fluttering wing between the hammer and the wood ; and simultaneously feeling that ethereal thrill, the submerged savage beneath, in his death-gasp, kept his hammer frozen there ; and so the bird of heaven, with



archangelic shrieks, and his imperial beak thrust upwards, and his whole captive form folded in the flag of Ahab, went down with his ship, which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her, and helmeted herself with it.

Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago.



## EPILOGUE

‘AND I ONLY AM ESCAPED ALONE TO TELL THEE.’

Job.

*The drama's done. Why then here does any one step forth?  
— Because one did survive the wreck.*

*It so chanced, that after the Parsee's disappearance, I was he whom the Fates ordained to take the place of Ahab's bowsman, when that bowsman assumed the vacant post; the same, who, when on the last day the three men were tossed from out of the rocking boat, was dropped astern. So, floating on the margin of the ensuing scene, and in full sight of it, when the half-spent suction of the sunk ship reached me, I was then, but slowly, drawn towards the closing vortex. When I reached it, it had subsided to a creamy pool. Round and round, then, and ever contracting towards the button-like black bubble at the axis of that slowly wheeling circle, like another Ixion I did revolve. Till, gaining that vital centre, the black bubble upward burst; and now, liberated by reason of its cunning spring, and, owing to its great buoyancy, rising with great force, the coffin life-buoy shot length-wise from the sea, fell over, and floated by my side. Buoyed up by that coffin, for almost one whole day and night, I floated on a soft and dirge-like main. The unharmed sharks, they glided by as if with padlocks on their mouths; the savage sea-hawks sailed with sheathed beaks. On the second day, a sail drew near, nearer, and picked me up at last. It was the devious-cruising Rachel, that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan.*

FINIS







## ETYMOLOGY AND EXTRACTS

The following etymology and extracts were prepared by Melville to serve as an introduction to the book. The quotations regarding whales comprise an anthology of comments from the Bible down to contemporary writers. It is thought by some critics that Melville possibly intended to use these quotations as headings for the chapters.







# ETYMOLOGY

SUPPLIED BY A LATE CONSUMPTIVE USHER TO A GRAMMAR SCHOOL

*The pale Usher — threadbare in coat, heart, body, and brain; I see him now. He was ever dusting his old lexicons and grammars, with a queer handkerchief, mockingly embellished with all the gay flags of all the known nations of the world. He loved to dust his old grammars; it somehow mildly reminded him of his mortality.*

‘WHILE you take in hand to school others, and to teach them by what name a whale-fish is to be called in our tongue, leaving out, through ignorance, the letter H, which almost alone maketh up the signification of the word, you deliver that which is not true.’  
*Hakluyt.*

‘WHALE. \* \* \* Sw. and Dan. *hval*. This animal is named from roundness or rolling; for in Dan. *hvalt* is arched or vaulted.’  
*Webster’s Dictionary.*

‘WHALE. \* \* \* It is more immediately from the Dut. and Ger. *Wallen*; A.S. *Walw-ian*, to roll, to wallow.’  
*Richardson’s Dictionary.*

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WHALE . . . . .	English
BALEINE . . . . .	French
BALLENA . . . . .	Spanish
PEKEE-NUEE-NUEE . . . . .	Fegee
PEHEE-NUEE-NUEE . . . . .	Erromanggoan



## EXTRACTS

SUPPLIED BY A SUB-SUB-LIBRARIAN

*It will be seen that this mere painstaking burrower and grub-worm of a poor devil of a Sub-Sub appears to have gone through the long Vaticans and street-stalls of the earth, picking up whatever random allusions to whales he could anyways find in any book whatsoever, sacred or profane. Therefore you must not, in every case at least, take the higgledy-piggledy whale statements, however authentic, in these extracts, for veritable gospel cetology. Far from it. As touching the ancient authors generally, as well as the poets here appearing, these extracts are solely valuable or entertaining, as affording a glancing bird's eye view of what has been promiscuously said, thought, fancied, and sung of Leviathan, by many nations and generations, including our own.*

*So fare thee well, poor devil of a Sub-Sub, whose commentator I am. Thou belongest to that hopeless, sallow tribe which no wine of this world will ever warm; and for whom even Pale Sherry would be too rosy-strong; but with whom one sometimes loves to sit, and feel poor-devilish; too; and grow convivial upon tears; and say to them bluntly, with full eyes and empty glasses, and in not altogether unpleasant sadness — Give it up, Sub-Subs! For by how much the more pains ye take to please the world, by so much the more shall ye for ever go thankless! Would that I could clear out Hampton Court and the Tuileries for ye! But gulp down your tears and hie aloft to the royal-mast with your hearts; for your friends who have gone before are clearing out the seven-storied heavens, and making refugees of long-pampered Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael, against your coming. Here ye strike but splintered hearts together — there, ye shall strike unsplinterable glasses!*

And God created great whales.

*Genesis.*

Leviathan maketh a path to shine after him;

One would think the deep to be hoary.

*Job.*



Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.

*Jonah.*

There go the ships; there is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein.

*Psalms.*

In that day, the Lord with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

*Isaiah.*

And what thing soever besides cometh within the chaos of this monster's mouth, be it beast, boat, or stone, down it goes all incontinently that foul great swallow of his, and perisheth in the bottomless gulf of his paunch.

*Holland's Plutarch's Morals.*

The Indian Sea breedeth the most and the biggest fishes that are: among which the Whales and Whirlpooles called Balane, take up as much in length as four acres or arpens of land.

*Holland's Pliny.*

Scarcely had we proceeded two days on the sea, when about sunrise a great many Whales and other monsters of the sea, appeared. Among the former, one was of a most monstrous size. \* \* This came towards us, open mouthed, raising the waves on all sides, and beating the sea before him into a foam.

*Tooke's Lucian. 'The True History.'*

He visited this country also with a view of catching horse-whales, which had bones of very great value for their teeth, of which he brought some to the king. \* \* \* The best whales were caught in his own country, of which some were forty-eight, some fifty yards long. He said that he was one of six who had killed sixty in two days.

*Ochter's verbal narrative taken down from  
his mouth by King Alfred, A. D. 890.*

And whereas all the other things, whether beast or vessel, that enter into the dreadful gulf of this monster's (whale's) mouth, are immediately lost and swallowed up, the sea-gudgeon retires into it in great security, and there sleeps.

*Montaigne's Apology for Raimond Sebond.*

The great Leviathan that maketh the seas to seethe like boiling pan.

*Lord Bacon's Version of the Psalms.*



Touching that monstrous bulk of the whale or ork we have received nothing certain. They grow exceeding fat, insomuch that an incredible quantity of oil will be extracted out of one whale.

*Ibid.* 'History of Life and Death.'

The sovereignest thing on earth is parmacetti for an inward bruise.

*King Henry.*

Very like a whale.

*Hamlet.*

Immense as whales, the motion of whose vast bodies can in a peaceful calm trouble the ocean till it boil.

*Sir William Davenant. Preface to Gondibert.*

That sea beast  
Leviathan, which God of, all his works  
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream.

*Paradise Lost.*

— There Leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, in the deep  
Stretched like a promontory sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving land; and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his breath spouts out a sea. *Ibid.*

The mighty whales which swim in a sea of water, and have a sea of oil swimming in them.

*Fuller's Profane and Holy State.*

While the whale is floating at the stern of the ship, they cut off his head, and tow it with a boat as near the shore as it will come; but it will be aground in twelve or thirteen feet water.

*Thomas Edge's Ten Voyages to Spitzbergen, in Purchass.*

Here they saw such huge troops of whales, that they were forced to proceed with a great deal of caution for fear they should run their ship upon them.

*Schouten's Sixth Circumnavigation.*

I was told of a whale taken near Shetland, that had above a barrel of herrings in his belly. \* \* \*

One of our harpooneers told me that he caught once a whale in Spitzbergen that was white all over.

*A Voyage to Greenland, A. D. 1671. Harris Coll.*

Several whales have come in upon this coast (Fife) Anno 1652, one eighty feet in length of the whale-bone kind came in, which, (as



I was informed) besides a vast quantity of oil, did afford 500 weight of baleen. The jaws of it stand for a gate in the garden of Pitferren.

*Sibbald's Fife and Kinross.*

Whales in the sea

God's voice obey.

*N. E. Primer.*

We saw also abundance of large whales, there being more in those southern seas, as I may say, by a hundred to one; than we have to the northward of us.

*Captain Cowley's Voyage round the Globe. A. D. 1720.*

If we compare land animals in respect to magnitude, with those that take up their abode in the deep, we shall find they will appear contemptible in the comparison. The whale is doubtless the largest animal in creation.

*Goldsmith, Nat. Hist.*

The larger whales, they seldom venture to attack. They stand in so great dread of some of them, that when out at sea they are afraid to mention even their names, and carry dung, lime stone, juniper wood, and some other articles of the same nature in their boats, in order to terrify and prevent their too near approach.

*Uno von Troil's Letters on Banks's and Solander's Voyage to Iceland in 1772.*

The Spermacetti Whale found by the Nantuckois, is an active, fierce animal, and requires vast address and boldness in the fishermen. *Thomas Jefferson's Whale Memorial to the French minister in 1778.*

And pray, sir, what in the world is equal to it?

*Edmund Burke's reference in Parliament to the Nantucket Whale-Fishery.*

A tenth branch of the king's ordinary revenue, said to be grounded on the consideration of his guarding and protecting the seas from pirates and robbers, is the right to *royal fish*, which are whale and sturgeon. And these, when either thrown ashore or caught near the coast, are the property of the king.

*Blackstone.*

Ten or fifteen gallons of blood are thrown out of the heart at a stroke, with immense velocity.

*John Hunter's account of the dissection of a whale. (A small sized one.)*



The aorta of a whale is larger in the bore than the main pipe of the water-works at London Bridge, and the water roaring in its passage through that pipe is inferior in impetus and velocity to the blood gushing from the whale's heart.

*Paley's Theology.*

The whale is a mammiferous animal without hind feet.

*Baron Cuvier.*

In 40 degrees south, we saw Spermacetti Whales, but did not take any till the first of May, the sea being then covered with them.

*Colnett's Voyage for the Purpose of Extending  
the Spermacetti Whale Fishery.*

Io! Pæan! Io! sing,  
To the finny people's king.  
Not a mightier whale than this  
In the vast Atlantic is;  
Not a fatter fish than he,  
Flounders round the Polar Sea.

*Charles Lamb's Triumph of the Whale.*

In the year 1690 some persons were on a high hill observing the whales spouting and sporting with each other, when one observed; there — pointing to the sea — is a green pasture where our children's grand-children will go for bread. *Obed Macy's History of Nantucket.*

I built a cottage for Susan and myself and made a gateway in the form of a Gothic Arch, by setting up a whale's jaw bones.

*Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales.*

She came to bespeak a monument for her first love, who had been killed by a whale in the Pacific ocean, no less than forty years ago.

*Ibid.*

'No, Sir, 'tis a Right Whale,' answered Tom; 'I saw his spout; he threw up a pair of as pretty rainbows as a Christian would wish to look at. He's a raal oil-butt, that fellow!'

*Cooper's Pilot.*

The papers were brought in, and we saw in the Berlin Gazette that whales had been introduced on the stage there.

*Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe.*



A mariner sat in the shrouds one night,  
 The wind was piping free;  
 Now bright, now dimmed, was the moonlight pale,  
 And the phosphor gleamed in the wake of the whale,  
 As it floundered in the sea. *Elizabeth Oakes Smith.*

The quantity of line withdrawn from the different boats engaged in the capture of this one whale, amounted altogether to 10,440 yards or nearly six English miles. \* \* \*

Sometimes the whale shakes its tremendous tail in the air, which, cracking like a whip, resounds to the distance of three or four miles.

*Scoresby.*

The Cachalot (Sperm Whale) is not only better armed than the True Whale (Greenland or Right Whale) in possessing a formidable weapon at either extremity of its body, but also more frequently displays a disposition to employ these weapons offensively, and in a manner at once so artful, bold, and mischievous, as to lead to its being regarded as the most dangerous to attack of all the known species of the whale tribe.

*Frederick Debell Bennett's Whaling Voyage Round the Globe, 1840.*

Being once pursued by a whale which he had wounded, he parried the assault for some time with a lance; but the furious monster at length rushed on the boat; himself and comrades only being preserved by leaping into the water when they saw the onset was inevitable.

*Missionary Journal of Tyerman and Bennett.*

'Nantucket itself,' said Mr. Webster, 'is a very striking and peculiar portion of the National interest. There is a population of eight or nine thousand persons, living here in the sea, adding largely every year to the National wealth by the boldest and most persevering industry.'

*Report of Daniel Webster's Speech in the U.S. Senate, on the application for the Erection of a Breakwater at Nantucket. 1828.*

It is impossible to meet a whale-ship on the ocean without being struck by her near appearance. The vessel under short sail, with look-outs at the mast-heads, eagerly scanning the wide expanse around them, has a totally different air from those engaged in a regular voyage.

*Currents and Whaling. U. S. Ex. Ex.*



Pedestrians in the vicinity of London and elsewhere may recollect having seen large curved bones set upright in the earth, either to form arches over gateways, or entrances to alcoves, and they may perhaps have been told that these were the ribs of whales.

*Tales of a Whale Voyager to the Arctic Ocean.*

It is generally well known that out of the crews of Whaling vessels (American) few ever return in the ships on board of which they departed.

*Cruise in a Whale Boat.*

Suddenly a mighty mass emerged from the water, and shot up perpendicularly into the air. It was the whale.

*Miriam Coffin or the Whale Fisherman.*

On one occasion I saw two of these monsters (whales) probably male and female, slowly swimming, one after the other, within less than a stone's throw of the shore (Tierra del Fuego), over which the beech tree extended its branches. *Darwin's Voyage of a Naturalist.*

'Stern all!' exclaimed the mate, as upon turning his head, he saw the distended jaws of a large Sperm Whale close to the head of the boat, threatening it with instant destruction; — 'Stern all, for your lives!'

*Wharton the Whale Killer.*

So be cheery, my lads, let your hearts never fail,  
While the bold harpooneer is striking the whale!

*Nantucket Song.*

Oh, the rare old Whale, mid storm and gale

In his ocean home will be

A giant in might, where might is right,

And King of the boundless sea.

*Whale Song.*







## APPENDIX







## APPENDIX

### HERMAN MELVILLE

Herman Melville, mariner and mystic, as Raymond M. Weaver, his biographer, calls him, was born in New York on August 1, 1819, the birth year of Kingsley, Lowell, Ruskin, Whitman, and Queen Victoria.

His ancestors were of old Scottish lineage, tracing their origin to a Sir Richard de Melvill, a nobleman who swore allegiance to Edward the First in the thirteenth century. Allan Melville, his father, was a merchant, whose business as an importer necessitated many trips to Europe. In 1814 Allan married Maria Gansevoort, a woman whom Weaver describes as 'remembered in such terms as *cold*, *worldly*, *formal*, *haughty*, and *proper*; as putting the highest premium upon appearances; as frigidly contemptuous of Melville's domestic economy.' Herman, the third of eight children, was named after his mother's brother.

The sea and ships had a strong attraction for Melville, when he was little more than ten years old. Writing of his father and his home, he says, 'Of winter evenings in New York, by the well-remembered sea-coal fire in old Greenwich-street, he used to tell my brother and me of the monstrous waves at sea, mountains high; of the masts bending like twigs; and all about Havre, and Liverpool, and about going up into the ball of St. Paul's in London.'



His boyhood was that of a normal child, although his father declared him 'very backward in speech and somewhat slow in comprehension.' The testimony of one of his instructors in the Albany Classical Institute for Boys would seem to indicate that he had at this time made considerable progress. In a biographical sketch of Melville, written in 1891, J. E. A. Smith says, 'Professor West now remembers him (Melville) as a favorite pupil, not distinguished for mathematics, but very much so in the writing of "themes" or "compositions" and fond of doing it, while the great majority of pupils dreaded it as a task, and would shirk it if they could.'

The death of his father made it necessary for young Melville to leave school. When fifteen years old, he worked as a clerk in the New York State Bank of which his uncle was a trustee. The following year he was in the employ of his brother, making use of his spare moments in study. According to his own account, the next year was spent upon his uncle's farm in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Disappointed because of the failure of his plans for life, he cut loose from all family ties, and set sail for Liverpool upon a merchantman as a common sailor. In *Redburn: His First Voyage, being the Sailor-boy Confessions and Reminiscences of the Son-of-a-Gentleman*, we have a record of his experiences while aboard the *Highlander* and in Liverpool.

The three years following his return were spent in teaching school in East Albany, New York, for 'six dollars a quarter and board,' and in numerous attempts at authorship. Speaking of these early efforts he says, 'They were to be found lying all round the house; gave a great deal





HERMAN MELVILLE



of trouble to the housemaids in sweeping; went for kindlings to the fires; and were forever flitting out of the windows, and under the doorsills, into the faces of people passing.'

Melville, discouraged by these unsuccessful attempts, determined to join the crew of a whaler. The reading of Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*, that realistic account of life in the forecastle, published in 1840, no doubt aroused in him a desire for adventure. A whaler also offered both an opportunity to make an independent living, and an isolation for a period of years, a thing he much desired.

Acting upon this impulse, Melville arrived in New Bedford about the middle of December, 1840. It is interesting to note that Richard Henry Dana, father of the author of *Two Years before the Mast*, was lecturing in the city at this time.

The *Acushnet*, a three hundred and fifty-nine ton whaler, was about to leave Fairhaven, a thriving whaling port across the river from New Bedford, on her maiden trip. It was with this ship that Melville decided to cast his lot. According to Starbuck's *History of the American Whale Fishery from its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876*, the *Acushnet* sailed from Fairhaven on January 3, 1841, bound for the Pacific Ocean. The official 'List of Persons' vouched for by Valentine Pease, Master, and delivered to the collector of customs, consisted of twenty-two Americans, three Portuguese, and one Englishman, not such a motley crew as signed with Captains Bildad and Peleg. Melville is described in this list as twenty-one years old, five feet, nine and one-half inches tall, of dark complexion, and with brown hair. It is curious to note



## LIST OF PERSONS.

Name		Rank		Age		Height		Weight		Complexion		Hair		Eyes		Mouth		Nose		Ears		Fingers		Feet		Hands		Skin		Tattoos		Scars		Other		Remarks							
1	John Smith	1	1	25	5' 8"	160	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170						
2	James Brown	2	2	28	5' 10"	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180						
3	Robert Johnson	3	3	30	6' 0"	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190					
4	William Davis	4	4	32	5' 11"	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200					
5	Thomas Wilson	5	5	35	6' 2"	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210				
6	Charles Moore	6	6	38	6' 4"	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220	220				
7	George Taylor	7	7	40	6' 6"	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230			
8	Edward White	8	8	42	6' 8"	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240			
9	Frank Green	9	9	45	6' 10"	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250		
10	Henry Black	10	10	48	7' 0"	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260		
11	Samuel King	11	11	50	7' 2"	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270		
12	Benjamin Hill	12	12	52	7' 4"	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	
13	Joseph Scott	13	13	55	7' 6"	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	290	
14	Samuel Adams	14	14	58	7' 8"	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	
15	John Hancock	15	15	60	8' 0"	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	
16	Thomas Jefferson	16	16	62	8' 2"	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	
17	James Madison	17	17	65	8' 4"	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	330	
18	George Washington	18	18	68	8' 6"	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	340	
19	John Adams	19	19	70	8' 8"	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350
20	Thomas Jefferson	20	20	72	9' 0"	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360

## THE OFFICIAL LIST OF THE CREW OF THE ACUSHNET

Melville's is the second underlined name in the list. The captain of a whaler was required to file such a list with the collector of customs before leaving port.

that, although New York was his home at this time, he gives Fairhaven as his place of residence.

After fifteen months in the South Pacific, during which time the *Acushnet* entered no port, Melville, with a fellow



shipmate, Richard T. Greene, deserted the ship at Nukuhiva, the chief port of the Marquesas Islands, provided with as much ship's biscuit and calico as they could carry in their clothes. Unknown perils among savage cannibal tribes appeared less terrible to them than the too real hardships experienced under the testy old Captain Pease.

His life aboard the *Acushnet* gave Melville ample opportunity to study all the phases of whaling. These observations were later recorded accurately and with painstaking detail in *Moby Dick*. His experiences among the Typees, a cannibal tribe of the Marquesas Islands, furnished the material for that fascinating glimpse of Polynesian life, *Typee*. It is the pioneer of stories of the South Seas. Stevenson paid tribute to this work when he said, 'There are but two writers who have touched the South Seas with any genius, both Americans: Melville and Charles Warren Stoddard.'

This book had immediate success, appearing simultaneously in New York and London. It was dedicated to Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of Massachusetts, whose daughter Melville married in August, 1847.

*Typee*, published in 1846, was followed a year later by *Omoo*, which did much to increase Melville's popularity both at home and abroad. This story of adventures in the South Seas had a purpose similar to that of *Typee*. As he indicates in the preface, the book is intended 'to give a familiar account of the present condition of the converted Polynesians.' *Mardi*, appearing in 1849, is a fictitious narrative of the South Seas. His two earlier books had been received with incredulity in many quarters, so *Mardi* was presented to see whether fiction could pass for truth.



*Redburn*, the story of his first voyage, and *White Jacket*, a record of his experiences in the American navy, offered in the form of a chronicle, were published in 1850, one year before the appearance of his masterpiece, *Moby Dick*. *Pierre*, published in the following year, and *Israel Potter*, four years later, complete the list of Melville's longer works.

After a short trip to England in 1849 to consult his publishers, he returned to make his home in Lenox among the Berkshire Hills. Here, with Hawthorne for a near neighbor and friend, Melville wrote *Moby Dick*. The latter part of his life was spent in New York, where for nearly twenty years he occupied a position as an inspector of customs. He died on September 28, 1891.

### MOBY DICK, THE BOOK

In the May number of *The Knickerbocker*, or the *New York Monthly Magazine* (1839), there appeared a short story under the title *Mocha Dick*, or the *White Whale of the Pacific*, purporting to be a leaf from a manuscript journal by J. N. Reynolds, Esq. The whale of this narrative was first seen about 1810 near the island of Mocha, off the coast of Chili. In over a hundred engagements he had been the victor.

'Numerous boats are known to have been shattered by his immense flukes,' wrote Reynolds, 'or ground to pieces in the crash of his powerful jaws; and on one occasion it is said that he came off victorious from a conflict with the crews of three English whalers, striking fiercely at the last of the retreating boats at the moment it was rising from the water in its hoist up to the ship's davits. It must not be supposed, howbeit, that through all this



desperate warfare, our leviathan passed unscathed. A back serried with irons, and from fifty to a hundred yards of line trailing in his wake, sufficiently attested, that though unconquered, he had not proved invulnerable. From the period of Dick's first appearance, his celebrity continued to increase. . . . Indeed, nearly every whaling captain who rounded Cape Horn, if he possessed any professional ambition, or valued himself on his skill in subduing the monarch of the seas, would lay his vessel along the coast, in the hope of having an opportunity to try the muscle of this doughty champion, who was never known to shun opponents. . . . From the effect of age, or more probably from a freak of nature . . . he was white as wool. . . . Viewed from a distance, the practiced eye of a sailor only could decide that the moving mass which constituted this enormous animal was not a white cloud sailing along the horizon.'

So notorious did this old bull whale become, that the customary inquiry of whalers, when meeting upon the high seas, was, 'Any news from Mocha Dick?'

A whaler out from Nantucket finally met this champion of the deep, and after a furious struggle, succeeded in capturing him. The first mate, who threw the fatal harpoon, said, 'Mocha Dick was the longest whale I ever looked upon. He measured more than seventy feet from his noodle to the tips of his flukes, and yielded one hundred barrels of clear oil, with a proportionate quantity of "head-matter."' When cutting in this monster, the crew found over twenty harpoons embedded in his body, some of which were thickly incrustated with rust.

This narrative, written twelve years before the publication of *Moby Dick*, undoubtedly was familiar to Melville.



The similarity of not only the title but also several incidents in both stories would seem to indicate that Reynolds furnished some of the elements that entered into the world's greatest whaling classic.

The Spouter Inn of *Moby Dick* actually did exist at the corner of Union and Front Streets. The Chapel, now known as the Seamen's Bethel, still stands on Johnny Cake Hill, a spiritual haven for sailors to-day as it was when Melville and Queequeg entered it on that stormy Sunday night. Of course there can be no Try-Pots Inn, as the author sailed from Nantucket in imagination only. Starbuck's *History of the American Whale Fishery*, with its complete list of ships' captains and owners, contains many Coffins, Husseys, and Starbucks, all very real names, and intimately associated with the Nantucket and New Bedford whaling industry for many generations. Possibly Melville thought such names would add a touch of realism to his fantastic tale.

### Comments on *Moby Dick*

*Moby Dick* is a very valuable book, on account of the unparalleled mass of information it contains on the subject of the history and capture of the great and terrible cachalot or sperm whale.

— *Dublin University Magazine*

Melville's masterpiece is *Moby Dick*. The breadth of the sea is in it and much of the passion and charm of the most venturous calling plied upon the deep. It is a cool reader that does not become as eager as the terrible Captain Ahab in his demoniacal pursuit of Moby Dick, the invincible whale, a creation of the imagination not unworthy of a great poet. — William P. Trent, *A History of American Literature*

In that wild, beautiful romance, *Moby Dick*, Melville seems to have spoken the very secret of the sea, and to have drawn into his tale all the magic, all the sadness, all the wild joy of many waters. It stands



quite alone; quite unlike any other book known to me. It strikes a note no other sea writer has ever struck. — John Masefield

A new work by Herman Melville, *Moby Dick; or The Whale*, has just been issued by Harper and Brothers, which in point of richness and variety of incident, originality of conception, and splendor of description, surpasses any of the former productions of this highly successful author. Moby Dick is the name of an old white whale; half fish and half devil; the terror of the Nantucket cruisers; the scourge of distant oceans; leading an invulnerable, charmed life; the subject of many grim and ghostly traditions. This huge sea monster has a conflict with one Captain Ahab; the veteran Nantucket salt comes off second best; not only loses a leg in the affray, but receives a twist of the brain; becomes the victim of a deep, cunning monomania; believes himself predestined to take a bloody revenge on his fearful enemy, and pursues him with fierce demoniac energy of purpose . . . On this slight framework, the author has constructed a romance, a tragedy, and a natural history.

In the course of the narrative the habits of the whale are fully and ably described. Frequent graphic and instructive sketches of the fishery, of sea life in a whaling vessel, and of manners and customs of strange nations are interspersed with excellent artistic effect among the thrilling scenes of the story. The various processes of procuring oil are explained with the minute, painstaking fidelity of a statistical record, contrasting strangely with the weird, phantom-like character of the plot, and of some of the leading personages, who present a no less unearthly appearance than the witches in *Macbeth*. These sudden and decided transitions form a striking feature of the volume. Difficult of management, in the highest degree, they are wrought with consummate skill. To a less gifted author, they would inevitably have proved fatal. He has not only deftly avoided their dangers, but made them an element of great power. They constantly pique the attention of the reader, keeping curiosity alive, and presenting the combined charm of surprise and alternation.

The introductory chapters of the volume, containing sketches of life in the great marts of Whalingdom, New Bedford and Nantucket, are pervaded with a fine vein of comic humor, and reveal a succession of portraitures, in which the lineaments of nature shine forth, through



a good deal of perverse, intentional exaggeration. To many readers, these will prove the most interesting portions of the work. Nothing can be better than the description of the owners of the vessel, Captain Peleg and Captain Bildad, whose acquaintance we make before the commencement of the voyage. The character of Captain Ahab also opens upon us with wonderful power. He exercises a wild, bewildering fascination by his dark and mysterious nature, which is not at all diminished when we obtain a clearer insight into his strange history. Indeed, all the members of the ship's company, the three mates, Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask, the wild savage Gayheader, the case-hardened old blacksmith, to say nothing of the pearl of a New Zealand harpooner, the bosom friend of the narrator — all stand before us in the strongest individual relief, presenting a unique picture gallery, which every artist must despair of rivaling.

The plot becomes more intense and tragic, as it approaches the dénouement. The malicious old Moby Dick, after long cruisions in pursuit of him, is at length discovered. He comes up to the battle, like an army with banners. He seems inspired with the same fierce, inveterate cunning with which Captain Ahab has followed the traces of his mortal foe. The fight is described in letters of blood. . . .

— *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, December, 1851

### Comments on Melville's Style

Naturalness is, on the whole, Melville's prime characteristic, both in the tone and in the style of his productions. His narratives are as racy and vigorous as those of Defoe or Smollett or Marryat; his character sketches are such as only a man of keen observation, and as keen a sense of humor, could have realized and depicted. His seamen and his sea captains all, from the noble, unsophisticated Mehevi in *Typee* to the semi-civilized, comical Queequeg in *Moby Dick*, are admirably vivid and impressive, and the reader who shall once have made their acquaintance will thenceforward in no wise be persuaded that they are not real and living personages.

— Henry S. Salt, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1892, volume 292

His gift of lucid, easy narrative, his early adherence to faithful description, his use of rich resources of experience, his strangely modern psychology, his delightful skill in portraiture, his volubility in



dialogue — these excellences have been noted. . . . But to pursue this ledger method does not help us, and it leaves unnoticed Melville's grand faculty, the faculty which stations him uniquely among modern imaginative writers. He was a myth-maker, a creator, a poet in the essential meaning of the word, and all his best powers were fused in one vital imagination, *Moby Dick*. It is as purely a creation as *Paradise Lost*, born of the same mythopoetic faculty, and making of the myth, in the old heroic way, a parable as well. . . .

He disdained every curbing and extravagated with absolute wilfulness, being tempted by the richness and wildness of life rather than by its order and discipline. He brooded upon a vast, lava like grandeur, still smoking heat, with passion and sorrow hanging huge above, cloud-like; and for all his wide difference in theme he is as romantic as Scott and Dickens in England, or Poe and Hawthorne in America. — John Freeman, *Herman Melville* in English Men of Letters Series

Herman Melville is undoubtedly an original thinker, and boldly and unreservedly expresses his opinions, often in a way that irresistibly startles and enchains the interest of the reader. He possesses amazing powers of expression: he can be terse, copious, eloquent, brilliant, imaginative, poetical, satirical, pathetic, at will. He is never stupid, never dull; but he is often mystical and unintelligible, — not from any inability to express himself in pure, manly English, and a child can understand what he says, — but the ablest critic cannot always tell what he really means.

— *Dublin University Magazine*

## THE WHALING INDUSTRY

As early as 1644, the town of Southampton, Long Island, made provision for the disposal of any whales that were cast upon the shore within the limits of the town. A few years later, expeditions were fitted out for whaling along the shores.

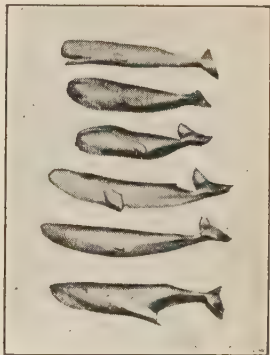
Interest in whaling was first aroused in Nantucket, according to Thomas Macy in his *History of Nantucket*, 'by some of the original purchasers of the island; the



circumstances of which are handed down by tradition, and are as follows: A whale, of the kind called "scragg," came into the harbor and continued there three days. This excited the curiosity of the people, and led them to devise measures to prevent his return out of the harbor. They accordingly invented and caused to be wrought for them a harpoon, with which they attacked and killed the whale. This first success encouraged them to undertake whaling as a permanent business; whales being at that time numerous in the vicinity of the shores.'

Soon after 1700 Nantucket advanced rapidly to the front rank as a whaling port. For some years whales were so plentiful that the inhabitants were able to carry on the industry without going out of sight of land. 'The south side of the island,' says St. John de Crèvecoeur, a writer of the period, 'was divided into four equal parts, and each

part was assigned to a company of six, which though thus separated, still carried on their business in common. In the middle of this distance' (of about three and a half miles to each division) 'they erected a mast, provided with sufficient number of rounds, and near it they built a temporary hut where five of the associates lived, whilst



MODELS OF WHALES

These were made by Mr. Frank Wood, curator of the Bourne Whaling Museum. The models, reading from the top, are sperm, southern right, bowhead (Arctic right, or Greenland), finback, sulphur-bottom, and humpback.



the sixth from his high station carefully looked toward the sea, in order to observe the spouting of whales.' As soon as one was seen, the boats were launched, and the chase was on. The whale when captured was towed to shore, where the blubber was tried out in try-houses.



A NEW BEDFORD WHARF SCENE IN 1870

Several whalers have just arrived and unloaded their cargoes of whale oil, which is in the barrels on the wharf.

From this simple beginning the business increased until in 1821 Nantucket was the chief whaling port in the United States. Whalers entering Nantucket in that year brought in a total of 22,915 barrels of sperm oil, 8,632 barrels of whale oil, and 38,092 pounds of whalebone. With the increase in the size of the ships, it was soon evident that the entrance to Nantucket harbor was not sufficiently deep to accommodate them. A floating dock,



propelled by steam, and called *The Camels*, was built in 1839 to float the ships over the shallow entrance to the harbor. This was Nantucket's last effort to retain her place as a whaling port.

New Bedford, which since about 1760 had been engaged in whaling, now far outstripped the island whalemén,



AN OLD SAIL LOFT

This is at the end of Merrill's wharf. New Bedford. Massachusetts.

The sails of many New Bedford whalers were made here.

and held the lead as a whaling port until the death of the industry in New England. The golden days of New Bedford whaling were just prior to the Civil War. In 1857 this city had a fleet of 320 ships, valued at \$12,000,000, which brought into port cargoes valued at \$8,000,000. In this city alone whaling and the industries allied with it, such as the making of rope, sails, casks, etc., employed over 10,000 men.



The decline of whaling dates from the Civil War. The rebel privateers destroyed many whalers. The shyness and the scarcity of whales now made longer voyages necessary, and consequently increased the expense of outfitting the ships. With the introduction of coal oil as a lubricant, however, the fleets were still further diminished, until to-day not a single whaler calls New Bedford her home port. As Freeman in his *Herman Melville* says, 'Whaling is now history.'

### The Whale Ship

The whaler was as staunch a vessel as Yankee skill and ingenuity could build. With ribs and beams of live oak from Florida, and a hull completely sheathed with copper, she was able to ride the fiercest gale. The capacity of the average whaler was a little more than three hundred and fifty tons, while that of the modern ocean liner, the *Leviathan*, is more than fifty-nine thousand. The *Charles W. Morgan*, pictures of which appear in this book, is a ship of three hundred and fourteen tons. A ship of this size usually carried a crew of about forty men. There was ample space for crew, cargo, extra gear and rigging, and provisions for a voyage of four years or more if necessary.

### The Whaleboat

The following description of the American whaleboat is taken from *Nimrod of the Sea* by William M. Davis, an authority on the subject. Since the whaleboat is so vitally related to the whaleman's life, and is mentioned so often in *Moby Dick*, it seems fitting that a detailed description should be given. 'It is the fruit of a century's experience, and the sharpened sense and ingenuity of an inventive



people, urged by the peril of the chase and the value of the prize. For lightness and form; for carrying capacity as compared with its weight and sea-going qualities; for speed and facility of movement at the word of command; for the placing of men at the best advantage in the exercise of their power; by nicest adaptation of the varying length of the oar to its position in the boat; and lastly, for a simplicity of construction, which renders repairs practicable on board the ship, the whaleboat is simply as perfect as the combined skill of the million men who have risked life and limb in service could make it. This paragon of a boat is twenty-eight feet long, sharp and as clean-cut as a dolphin, bow and stern swelling amidships to six feet, with a bottom round and buoyant.

The gunwale amidships, twenty-two inches above the keel, rises with an accelerated curve to thirty-seven inches at each end, and this rise of bow and stern, with the clipper-like upper form, gives it a duck-like capacity to top the oncoming waves, so that it will dryly ride where ordinary boats would fill. The gunwales and keel, of the best timber, are her heaviest parts, and give stiffness to the whole; the timbers, sprung to shape, are a half-inch or three-quarters in depth, and the planking is half-inch white cedar. Her thwarts are inch pine, supported by knees of greater strength than the other



A FULLY EQUIPPED WHALEBOAT

One of the *Charles W. Morgan's* boats on the wharf at South Dartmouth, Massachusetts.



timbers. Through the cuddy-board projects a silk-hat-shaped loggerhead, for snubbing and managing the running line; the stem of the boat is deeply grooved on top, the bottom of the groove being bushed with a block of lead, or sometimes a bronze roller, and over this the line passes from the boat. Four feet of the length of the bow is covered in by a depressed box, in which the spear-line, attached to the harpoons, lies in carefully adjusted coils. Immediately back of the box is a thick pine plank in which the knee-brace is cut. The gunwale is pierced at proper distances for thole pins, of wood, and all sound of working oars is muffled by well-thrummed mats, kept carefully greased, so that we can steal on our prey silent as the cavalry of the poor badgered Lear. The planking is smoothed with sand-paper, and painted. Here we have a boat which two men may lift, and which will make ten miles an hour in dead chase by the oars alone.'

### The Lays

All members of a whaler's crew, from the captain down, received a proportionate part of the gross earnings of the voyage called a 'lay' instead of any fixed wages. Under this plan, all were interested in making the voyage as profitable as possible. The captain's share was often spoken of as a short lay, while that of the green hand or the cabin-boy was called a long lay. The lays varied according to the owners of the ships. The following will give an idea of the part each member of the crew received.

Captain . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$	Boat steerer, or Harpooner . .	$\frac{1}{50}$
First Mate . .	$\frac{1}{18}$	Steward . . . . .	$\frac{1}{80}$
Second Mate . .	$\frac{1}{20}$	Able seaman . . . . .	$\frac{1}{128}$
Third Mate . .	$\frac{1}{24}$	Green hand . . . . .	$\frac{1}{160}$
Fourth Mate . .	$\frac{1}{30}$	Cabin-boy . . . . .	$\frac{1}{200}$



## Uses of Oil and Bone

Sperm oil was formerly used for the manufacture of candles. About the middle of the eighteenth century there were eight candle works in New England located in Boston, Providence, and Newport. Later the United States government used it in lighthouses. To-day it is principally used in signal lanterns on trains and as a machinery lubricant. The spermaceti, taken from the head of the whale, forms a base in the manufacture of the best cosmetics. The bone, taken from the mouth of the *right* or *whalebone* whale, formerly had many uses, and brought as much as six dollars a pound. It was used in the manufacture of whips, parasols, umbrellas, corsets, caps, hats, cushions for billiard tables, fishing rods, bows, penholders, paper cutters, shoehorns, etc. To-day it does not possess any value even as a curio.

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## SUBJECTS FOR ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION

### Subjects Based on *Moby Dick*

- An Old Inn — references : chapters ii and xiv  
 The Landlord — chapter ii  
 Queequeg, a Bosom Friend — chapters iii, ix, x, xi, and xii  
 An Old Chapel — chapter vi  
 Father Mapple — chapter viii  
 Nantucket — chapter xiii  
 Mrs. Hussey — chapters xiv and xvi  
 A Whaling Ship — chapter xv  
 Along the Wharves — chapters xv and xix  
 Captains Bildad and Peleg : a Contrast — chapter xv  
 Elijah — chapters xviii and xx  
 Aunt Charity — chapter xix  
 Preparing for the Voyage — chapter xix  
 The Three Mates — chapter xxii  
 A Whaler's Crew — chapter xxii  
 Captain Ahab — chapter xxiii and following chapters  
 The Harpooner — chapters xxv and xxxix  
 The Captain's Table — chapter xxvi  
 Captain Ahab's Purpose — chapter xxvii  
 Moby Dick — chapters xxx, lxx, lxxi, and lxxii  
 A Ship's Chart — chapter xxxii  
 The Chase — chapter xxxv



The Strangers — chapter xxxvi  
Catching a Whale — chapter xxxix  
A Narrow Escape — chapter xliii  
The Grand Armada — chapter xlvi  
A Castaway — chapter xlviii  
The Try-Works — chapter li  
Stowing Down — chapter lii  
Captain Boomer's Story — chapter liii  
A Strange Coffin — chapter lvi  
Ahab's Harpoon — chapter lvii  
The Storm — chapter lxi  
Ahab Meets Moby Dick — chapters lxx, lxxi, and lxxii

#### Subjects Concerning the Sea and Whaling

An Old Log Book  
Useful Products from the Whale  
Before the Mast  
Whaling in the Arctic  
Homeward Bound  
Scrimshaw  
Life on a Whaler  
A Sailor's Chest  
The Whaleboat  
An Old Sail Loft  
The Day before Sailing  
Lowering the Boats  
A Ship's Rigger  
Whaling Implements  
The Captain's Cabin  
Navigation Instruments  
The Seal Fishery



## QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

**Chapter I.** Why does the author suggest that he be called Ishmael? What is the purpose of this chapter? Why is the title of the chapter an appropriate one? Why does the author say that he "started for Cape Horn and the Pacific"? What is the meaning of the phrase "the Tyre of this Carthage"? In what way are the names of the inns suggestive?

**Chapter II.** Describe the Spouter-Inn. Point out words that add to the effectiveness of the descriptions. What statement in this chapter is in the nature of a proverb? Explain the meaning of it. Make a list of proverbial sayings as you read. How is the curiosity of the reader aroused? Indicate any instances of humor. Describe Queequeg.

**Chapter III.** In what respects is Queequeg an unusual character?

**Chapters IV-V.** Explain the silence of the whalemén at breakfast. Describe some water front familiar to you. How do you account for the cosmopolitan groups of seamen along the New Bedford docks? Explain the allusion near the end of page 32. What does the author mean when he says that "all these brave houses and flowery gardens came from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans"?

**Chapters VI-VIII.** Describe the chapel; the pulpit; the memorial tablets. Why does the author refer to the tablets as "frigid inscriptions"? Comment upon the appropriateness of the hymn and the sermon. Read the Book of Jonah and compare it with Father Mapple's discourse. Indicate the parts of the sermon that are particularly effective. Do you think that Father Mapple's audience appreciated his exposition?



**Chapters IX-XII.** What likable traits of character did Queequeg possess? Why did he become so attached to Ishmael? Indicate examples of effective contrast. Tell how Queequeg became a whaler. Relate the story Queequeg told of the wedding feast. Why did he tell it? What other traits of his character are revealed on his trip to Nantucket?

**Chapters XIII-XIV.** How did the inhabitants of Nantucket come to follow the sea for a livelihood? Why is Try Pots an appropriate name for a Nantucket inn? What are the causes of Ishmael's forebodings? Characterize Mrs. Hussey. Describe the supper.

**Chapters XV-XVIII.** Describe the *Pequod*. Compare the attitude of Captain Bildad with that of Captain Peleg. How is the reader's curiosity aroused? Indicate any traces of humor. Why is Elijah introduced? What is Ishmael's attitude toward him?

**Chapters XIX-XX.** Describe the preparations for a whaling voyage. (See pages 115-117.) What is left unexplained in chapter xx? What does the introduction of Aunt Charity add to the story? How do you account for the names of these Nantucket people?

**Chapter XXI.** Explain the duties of a pilot. Comment upon Captain Bildad's injunction as he left the *Pequod*.

**Chapter XXII.** What is the significance of the title of this chapter? Characterize the three mates. Describe the crew. Is it typical of a whaler?

**Chapters XXIII-XXIV.** Describe Captain Ahab. Study this character carefully, because he plays an important part in the story. How did the crew regard him? Locate the position of the *Pequod*. The author from time to time mentions the ship's position. Consult a



map and trace the course of the *Pequod*. Why does Stubb speak of Captain Ahab as "queer"?

**Chapters XXV-XXVI.** Why was the harpooner rated so high? Describe the living arrangements aboard a whaler. Contrast the captain's table with that of the harpooners.

**Chapter XXVII.** Why is this an important chapter? What further trait of Captain Ahab's character is revealed? What is Captain Ahab's interest in Moby Dick? Point out any dramatic incidents.

**Chapters XXVIII-XXIX.** What is Captain Ahab's state of mind as revealed in his soliloquy? Starbuck's in his? Stubb's in his?

**Chapter XXX.** How does the author arouse interest in Moby Dick? Describe him. What effect did Captain Ahab's encounter have upon him, physically and mentally?

**Chapter XXXI.** What is the purpose of this short chapter? Comment upon the title.

**Chapter XXXII.** How is Captain Ahab's determination further revealed here? How does the author show Captain Ahab's intensity of purpose?

**Chapter XXXIII.** How does Captain Ahab act in dealing with the crew? What does he fear?

**Chapter XXXIV.** How is the presence of a whale detected? In what respect does the spouting of a sperm whale differ from that of other whales?

**Chapter XXXV.** What mystery is now cleared away? Why do you suppose Captain Ahab left the ship and joined in the pursuit of the whale? Describe the chase. What elements add to the interest?

**Chapter XXXVI.** Describe the crew of Captain Ahab's boat. Characterize Fedallah.



**Chapter XXXVII.** What is brit? Why did the sight of the squid have such an effect upon the crew?

**Chapter XXXVIII.** Describe in detail the whale line and its arrangement in the tub. Contrast the methods of American and English whalers.

**Chapters XXXIX-XL.** Why was it necessary to wet the line? Point out examples of effective figurative expressions. Describe the dart; the crotch.

**Chapters XLI-XLII.** Explain the process of bringing a whale to the ship and fastening it; cutting in. What is the monkey-rope?

**Chapter XLIII.** Name some of the early uses of sperm oil. Of what use is it to-day? Explain the process of removing spermaceti. Relate Tashtego's adventure.

**Chapter XLIV.** Explain pitchpoling.

**Chapter XLV.** What is the spouting of a whale? What is Melville's explanation?

**Chapter XLVI.** What is the significance of the title of the chapter? Indicate the *Pequod's* position now. Why does not Captain Ahab touch at some port? Describe the armada.

**Chapter XLVII.** Consult an encyclopedia and make a report to the class on ambergris. Comment upon the name *Rose-Bud*. Indicate instances of humor.

**Chapters XLVIII-L.** What trait of Stubb's character is revealed here? Why did Stubb leave Pip? How is the sperm prepared for the trying-out process? Look up and be able to explain the various whaling terms used in these chapters. What are "Bible leaves"? Why are they given this name?

**Chapters LI-LII.** Explain the trying-out process; the stowing down; the clearing up. Compare this with



Kipling's explanation of the process followed in deep-sea fishing in *Captains Courageous*.

**Chapter LIII.** Relate Captain Ahab's interview with the captain of the *Samuel Enderby*. What did they have in common? Why was Captain Ahab so interested in Captain Boomer's story?

**Chapter LIV.** What reason is here given for Captain Ahab's holding himself aloof before the *Pequod* sailed? What were the duties of a ship's carpenter?

**Chapter LV.** What is meant by the term "break out"? Why was Captain Ahab so obstinate? Why did he finally follow out Starbuck's suggestion?

**Chapter LVI.** What traits of Queequeg's character are revealed here? How did the officers and the crew regard him? Describe his preparations for death.

**Chapter LVII.** What were the blacksmith's duties? Point out the dramatic elements in this chapter.

**Chapter LVIII.** Contrast the feelings existing among the crews of the two ships. What trace of softening can you find in Captain Ahab's character?

**Chapters LIX-LX.** What is the significance of the Parsee's words to Captain Ahab? Why did Captain Ahab destroy the quadrant?

**Chapter LXI.** Point out the dramatic elements. What were the rods? Explain corpusants. How was the crew affected by Captain Ahab's actions?

**Chapter LXII.** Read Starbuck's soliloquy on pages 350-352 and discuss his state of mind as revealed in his words.

**Chapters LXIII-LXIV.** Explain the effect of the storm upon the ship's compass. How did Captain Ahab continue to hold the crew in awe of him? Characterize the Manxman.



**Chapter LXV.** What indication is there to show that sailors are superstitious? Indicate instances of humor.

**Chapters LXVI-LXVIII.** Why does Captain Ahab refuse to aid the *Rachel's* captain? What further evidence of vindictiveness does Captain Ahab reveal? What ominous incident is related at the end of chapter lxvii? What is the effect of the words of the captain of the *Delight* upon Captain Ahab?

**Chapter LXIX.** What new light is thrown upon Captain Ahab's character? Discuss fully Captain Ahab's state of mind as he talks with Starbuck.

**Chapters LXX-LXXII and Epilogue.** Relate the dramatic story of the three days' chase. Indicate descriptions that particularly impressed you. These three concluding chapters contain much figurative language. Select the most effective examples. How is Fedallah's prophecy fulfilled? How did Ishmaël escape to tell the tale?

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

(The numbers in bold-faced type refer to pages.)

The setting of the first twenty chapters is divided between New Bedford and Nantucket, while that of the remaining chapters is aboard the *Pequod*. In these opening pages Melville gives the reader a vivid picture of life in the greatest two whaling ports of the country.

1. **Manhatto** : New York, the author's home city.
2. **Leviathan** : the name applied by Melville to the whale; it is used in referring to any exceedingly large animal.
3. **Gomorrah** : one of the 'cities of the plain,' destroyed by fire from heaven. See *Genesis*, xviii, xix. **Black Parliament**: held by Henry VIII in Bridewell. **Tophet** : the place of endless perdition, hell.



4. **Euroclydon** : ' a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.' See *Acts*, xxvii, 14.

6. **Hyperborean** : pertaining to a people, favorites of Apollo, who were supposed to dwell beyond the north wind, a land of perpetual spring and eternal youth.

7. **Cape of Blanco** : a cape on the northwestern coast of Africa.

10. **Feegees**: the Fiji Islands, a group of islands in the South Pacific, owned by Great Britain.

14. **Mt. Hecla** : a volcano in Iceland.

19. **Thirty Years' War** : a war begun in Bohemia in 1618 because of the religious intolerance of Emperor Ferdinand. It finally became a war between the Catholic and the Protestant countries. It ended in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia.

24. **Cretan labyrinth** : the labyrinth which is said to have held the Minotaur. See any mythology for the story.

29. **Ledyard** : John Ledyard 1755-1789, an American who accompanied Cook on his third voyage around the world. **Mungo Park** : a Scottish African explorer (1771-1806). He wrote *Travels in the Interior of Africa*, which is a record of his experiences.

31. **Broadway** : one of the principal streets of New York. **Chestnut** : one of the principal streets of Philadelphia. **Regent Street** : one of the finest streets in London. **Lascars** : East-Indian sailors. **Apollo Green** : a large park on the water front in Bombay, called Apollo Bunder to-day. **Water Street** : a commercial street at the lower end of Manhattan Island. **Wapping** : a district in London near the docks. **Tongatobooarrs** : natives of the Tonga Islands, southeast of the Fiji Islands. **Erromanggoans** : natives of an island in the New Hebrides group in the South Pacific. **Pannangians** : Melville probably was referring to the natives of Pangani, a seaport of German East Africa.

33. **Herr Alexander** : a magician, called Alexander the Paphlagonian, a celebrated impostor, who lived in the early part of the second century. He was a native of Paphlagonia, an ancient district of Asia Minor.

34. **Whaleman's Chapel** : The Seamen's Bethel on Johnny



Cake Hill, New Bedford, has served as a place of worship for sailors for ninety-five years. It was here that Melville attended service before leaving for Nantucket. The curious marble tablets, placed on the walls as memorials to sailors lost at sea, still remain just as Melville described them.

**38. Father Mapple** is a characterization of Enoch Mudge, the first chaplain of the Bethel. A pulpit, such as Melville described, did exist, but to-day a much less interesting one stands in its place.

**40. Ehrenbreitstein** : a German fortress on the Rhine River.  
**Victory's plank** : The *Victory* was the flagship of Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, where he died.

**43.** Melville has written a sermon in this chapter which is well adapted to sailors. Speaking through Father Mapple, he gives us a vivid account of Jonah's experience. Read *Jonah*.

**45. Sodom** : a city on the shore of the Dead Sea, destroyed with Gomorrah because of the wickedness of its people. See *Genesis*, xviii, xix.

**51. Nineveh** : an ancient city on the Tigris River.

**55. Socratic** : characteristic of Socrates, a great Athenian philosopher.

**62. Sag Harbor** : a town near the eastern end of Long Island, New York. It was once a great whaling port.

**66. Rokovoko** : Melville undoubtedly intended to write *Kokovoko*. See page 62. *Rokovoko* appears in the first edition and has never been changed.

**67. Acushnet river** : New Bedford harbor is at the mouth of this river.

**71. Eddystone lighthouse** : a lighthouse, one hundred and thirty-five feet in height, built on the Eddystone Rocks in the English Channel.

**75. Hussey** : Melville's use of names is interesting. Among the whalers that went out from Nantucket, several were owned by Husseys. The name of Coffin (chapters i and ii) also appears many times in lists of owners and captains of whalers.

**76. Tophet** : See note on page 3.

**81. Ramadan** : the Mohammedan ninth month. During this time no food can be eaten from dawn to sunset. **XXXIX Articles** :



the statements concerning doctrine that were drawn up by the Church of England in 1571. **Medes** : members of an old Aryan race that founded the Medo-Persian empire.

**82. Canterbury** : a cathedral city in England. The archbishop of Canterbury has the title of Primate of All England. **Becket** : Thomas à Becket, archbishop, was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170.

**84. Pottowottamie** : a county in central Oklahoma, originally inhabited by a large number of Indians of the Potawatami tribe. **Quaker** : one of a religious order called the Society of Friends. On pages 88 and 89 Melville comments upon the propensity of the Quakers for whaling. It is interesting to note that those responsible for bringing the whaling industry to its highest degree of success were the Quakers. The following extract from a resolution passed by the Governor's Council in 1758 seems to verify Melville's statements. 'Inasmuch as the Inhabitants of Nantucket most of whom are Quakers are by Law exempted from Impresses for military Service. And their Livelihood intirely depends on the Whale fishery — Advised that his Excellency give permission for all whaling Vessels belonging to said persons to pursue their Voyages. . . . ' **Quaker style** : Quakers dressed very simply in soft gray, dull drab, sage green, or dark brown, never wearing any gay colors. The typical dress of the Quaker was a straight square cut coat, which opened over a waistcoat of equal length reaching to the knees, the breeches were of the same material. The hat was of felt with an exceptionally wide brim. The shoes, the uppers of which were well above the instep, were fastened by a small strap over it, passing through a buckle.

**85. the Vineyard** : a short name for Martha's Vineyard, an island off the southern coast of Massachusetts.

**88. papers** : the agreement, drawn up by the ship's owners, which the sailors signed before shipping.

**96. Ahab of old** : the seventh king of Israel, who introduced the worship of Baal, met his death in battle. See *I Kings*, xvi, 29, and xxii, 34-38. **Gayhead** : a hamlet at the western end of Martha's Vineyard.

**106. Hittite** : a member of an ancient race in Asia Minor. See *Genesis*, xxiii, 10.



**108. Belial :** an ancient Hebrew name meaning the devil, or the spirit of evil personified.

**109. Davy Jones :** See the glossary.

**112. Santa :** Melville probably is referring to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, a town in Bolivia.

**126. Watts :** an English hymn writer of the eighteenth century.

**136. Ahasuerus :** a Median or a Persian king, supposed to be Xerxes or Artaxerxes. See *Esther*, i, 1. **Azores :** a group of islands in the North Atlantic belonging to Portugal.

**137. Scandinavian vocation :** whaling and fishing. A large number of the inhabitants of the Scandinavian peninsula, Norway and Sweden, gain their livelihood from the sea.

**138. Cellini :** an Italian engraver and sculptor of the sixteenth century. **Perseus :** the son of Zeus and Danaë. He slew Medusa. In Florence there is a statue by Cellini of Perseus, holding Medusa's head in his upraised hand.

**140. Manxman :** a native of the Isle of Man, an island in the Irish Sea, thirty miles west of England.

**143. Quito :** the capital of Ecuador.

**147. Mesopotamian :** of Mesopotamia, the region between the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers.

**152. Moorish :** pertaining to the Moors, a race inhabiting the southern Mediterranean coast. In Spanish history this name was applied to Arabs and Saracens.

**156. A dead whale or a stove boat !** the slogan of the whaler when in pursuit of a whale. The whaler's monument shown in the frontispiece bears these words. On the reverse side are these words :

IN HONOR OF THE WHALEMEN WHOSE SKILL, HARDIHOOD, AND  
DARING BROUGHT FAME TO NEW BEDFORD AND MADE ITS NAME  
KNOWN IN EVERY SEAPORT ON THE GLOBE

**158. Norway Maelstrom :** a whirlpool off the coast of Norway, formerly supposed to suck in ships and whales within a long radius.

**162. St. Vitus' imp :** Captain Ahab calls the steward's boy by this name, alluding to St. Vitus' dance, a nervous disease, char-



acterized by involuntary twitchings of the muscles. **Leyden jar** : a condenser for static electricity, named from a city in Holland where it originated.

**164. Iron Crown of Lombardy** : the crown of the ancient kings of Lombardy. It was used in the coronation of Henry of Luxembourg and all succeeding emperors. It is said to have been hammered out from a nail of the cross on which Christ died.

**165. deaf Burkes and blinded Bendigoes** : Burke, an English pugilist of the early eighteenth century; *Bendigo*, the nickname of an English pugilist.

**176. Ophites** : members of a religious body who held the serpent as a symbol of divine wisdom.

**177. Patagonian Cape** : Patagonia is a cold, bleak region comprising the southern extremity of South America.

**185. Line** : the equator.

**186. Zodiac** : an imaginary belt in the heavens, sixteen degrees wide, which includes the paths of the moon, the principal planets, and the sun. It is divided into twelve sections, or signs. See a dictionary. **Monsoons** : steady, northeast winds that blow in winter over an extent of forty degrees latitude along the Asiatic coast of the Pacific Ocean. **Pampas** : a strong, cold, southwest wind of the Argentine pampas. **Harmattans** : dry winds, off the western coast of Africa, which blow from the interior. **Trades** : dry winds in the tropics, blowing continually in an easterly direction toward the equator. **Levanter** : a strong easterly wind of the Mediterranean. **Simoom** : a hot, dry desert wind.

**190. Crusaders** : knights of medieval times who undertook the conquest of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulcher.

**193. There she blows!** the commonest cry used by whalers when a whale is sighted. This cry is repeated each time a spout is seen. 'Ah blows!' 'There go flukes!' 'There she breaches!' are other expressions used at such a time.

**195. Manillas** : a name applied to the Philippine Islands. Manila is a province of Luzon, the largest of these islands, and also the name of the capital city.

**211. Tamerlane** : a Tartar conqueror of Asia.

**213. Beelzebub** : the prince of demons, the devil.



**215. Crozetts :** a group of small uninhabited islands in the Indian Ocean, frequented by whalers. **Venetian blind :** a flexible window screen that can be raised or lowered.

**219. Circassian :** an inhabitant of Circassia, a former country, northwest of the Caucasus Mountains.

**222. Mazeppa :** a Cossack chieftain, who was punished for a crime by being bound to a horse and sent to his fate. He later fought against Russia in the battle of Poltava.

**238. Hyperborean :** See note on page 6.

**243. Holofernes :** an Assyrian general, killed by Judith. **Judith :** a Jewish widow who rescued her people from the Assyrians by gaining the affections of Holofernes, and then killing him.

**244. Siamese ligature :** a reference to the Siamese twins, who were united by a thick, fleshy ligament.

**248. Heidelberg Tun :** a large vat used for the storage of Rhenish wines.

**251. Muezzin :** one who calls the faithful to prayer in Mohammedan countries.

**256. Cleopatra's barges from Actium :** Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, brought Antony, who was engaged in a naval battle against Octavius at Actium, a reinforcement of sixty vessels. She, however, suddenly withdrew, thus causing Antony's defeat.

**258. Monongahela :** a whisky named from a river in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

**259. whether these spoutings are, after all, really water, or nothing but vapor :** It is now known that the spout of a whale is nothing more than the mist condensed from its breath, as Melville thought (page 263).

**265. She carries years' water in her :** Every whaler went to sea with a liberal supply of water. When a cask was emptied, it was filled with whale oil, so in this way every available space in the ship was used. In order to conserve the supply, water was removed from the butt through the bung-hole by means of a thief, a cylindrical can eight or ten inches in length and about an inch in diameter. Sometimes when the supply became low, the captain ordered the thief to be placed at the mainmast head. Whenever



a sailor wanted water, he had to climb the mast for the can, and then return it when he had used it.

**266. we sprang to the white-ash :** White ash was the wood used in making oars.

**271. Arnold, at the battle of Saratoga :** Benedict Arnold was an American general in the Revolutionary War. He turned traitor and later became a British general. The British under General Burgoyne surrendered to General Gates at Saratoga on October 17, 1777.

**272. Dardanelles :** a strait connecting the Sea of Marmora with the Aegean Sea.

**276. Crappoes :** a name used by New Bedford whalers when speaking of Frenchmen.

**277. Guernsey-man :** a native of Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands about fifty miles south of England

**281. St. Jago :** an old name for Sao Thiago, or Santiago, one of the largest of the Cape Verde Islands. **Bordeaux :** wine made in Bordeaux, France.

**283. Windsor soap :** a scented soap made from soda with one part olive oil and nine parts tallow. **important as an article of commerce :** Ambergris brought from twelve to twenty-two dollars an ounce, according to the quality. The Greeks made use of it in their churches, burning it as an incense.

**284. Mecca :** the birthplace of Mohammed, the sacred city of the Mohammedans. **St. Peter's :** the chief Roman Catholic church.

**289. Constantine's bath :** large baths in Rome, covering nearly the whole breadth of the Quirinal Hill, built by Constantine, a Roman emperor.

**290. Berkshire marble :** marble from quarries in Berkshire, one of the western counties in Massachusetts. **Champagne :** a former province of France. The district is noted for its wines.

**299. Tartarean :** pertaining to Tartarus, the fabled place of punishment in the lower world.

**300. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego :** See *Daniel*, iii, 19-27.

**303. Enderby** is another name associated with whaling. In 1847 Charles Enderby wrote an article setting forth plans for reëstablishing the southern whale fishery.



**307.** down comes the tail like a Lima tower : a reference to the falling of buildings and towers in Lima caused by earthquakes.

**314.** Grand-Lama : the principal one of the two lama-popes of Tibet and Mongolia.

**316.** Formosa : a large island in the China Sea, ceded to Japan by China in 1895. Bashee Isles : a group of small islands in the northern part of the Philippine group.

**320.** Aristotle : a Greek philosopher, the pupil of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great.

**322.** Lackaday islands : Melville probably meant the Laccadive Islands, which are about seventy-five miles off the south-western coast of India.

**329.** the Three Fates : the goddesses, according to mythology, who were supposed to control human and divine destinies.

**332.** Bastille : a government prison in Paris, destroyed by a popular uprising during the French Revolution.

**335.** Asphaltites : the name Josephus used in referring to the Dead Sea because of the bituminous deposits in the water.

**339.** the three Horatii : the three Roman brothers who fought with the three Curiatii for the supremacy of Rome over Alba.

**344.** Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin : See *Daniel*, v, 25-28.

**345.** Herculaneum : a Roman city near Naples, destroyed with Pompeii by an eruption of Vesuvius A.D. 79.

**352.** locked Japan : At the time Melville wrote *Moby Dick*, 1851, Japan was closed to foreign commerce.

**355.** loadstone : magnetic iron ore.

**360.** Isle of Man : See note on page 140.

**362.** Herod's murdered Innocents : Herod the Great, in attempting to kill the infant Christ, slew all the children in Bethlehem. See *Matthew*, ii, 16. the carved Roman slave : probably one of the *Three Slaves* by Tacca in Leghorn, Italy.

**371.** Rachel, weeping for her children : See *Matthew*, ii, 18.

**377.** Tarquin : the last king of Rome.

**384.** Albicore : a large oceanic fish, tunny fish.

**388.** Virginia's Natural Bridge : a celebrated natural bridge over Cedar Creek about one hundred and twenty miles from Richmond. The arch is two hundred and fifteen feet high.



**416. Monadnock :** a mountain in southern New Hampshire.

**421. Fata Morgana :** a mirage seen on the Sicilian coast, poetically attributed to the Fata Morgana, a fairy, who was the pupil of Merlin and the sister of King Arthur.

**423. Ixion :** a king of the Lapithæ, bound to a perpetually revolving wheel in the lower regions because he aspired to the love of Hera, wife of Zeus.

## GLOSSARY OF NAUTICAL AND WHALING TERMS

(The phraseology of sailors, especially of those upon a whaler, is so foreign to the landsman that the following list of terms has been prepared to aid the student in reading the text.)

**abaft :** toward the stern of a vessel.

**aft :** at or toward the stern of a vessel.

**after-hold :** that part of the hold of a vessel abaft the mainmast.

**ambergris :** a waxy concretion formed in the intestine of a sick sperm whale. Sometimes it is found in the whale, but usually on the surface of those waters frequented by whales, or upon the shore. It is used in the manufacture of perfumery, and formerly was used in cooking.

**articles :** the ship's papers. All sailors are required to sign these when they enter service.

**avast :** stop.

**azimuth :** a magnetic compass.

**backstay :** a stay rope supporting a mast on the after side.

**ballast :** any heavy substance, as sand, iron, or stone, placed in the hold of a vessel to steady it.

**barque, also bark :** a three masted vessel with foremast and mainmast square-rigged and the mizzenmast fore-and-aft rigged.

**batten :** to put tarpaulins over a hatchway and fasten them by strips of wood along the edges.

**beam :** the greatest width of a ship's hull.

**before the mast :** forward of the foremast ; also used in referring to the rank and condition of ordinary sailors, whose quarters are in that part of the vessel.



- bend the sails** : to make fast the sails by tying them to a gaff or to a yard.
- binnacle** : a stand for a ship's compass, usually beside the steering wheel.
- black fish** : a large fish similar to a porpoise. The oil taken from the head is the finest lubricant known and is used in watches.
- blanket-piece** : the strip of blubber which is hoisted to the main-top when cut from the whale.
- blubber** : the thick, oily covering of the whale from which oil is extracted.
- blubber-hook** : a large iron hook, weighing about one hundred pounds, used in hoisting the blubber to the deck.
- blubber-room** : a section in the upper hold where blubber is stored temporarily.
- boarding-sword** : a two-edged knife with a long handle used in cutting the blanket-piece.
- boat-hook** : a long pole with a hook at one end for holding a boat to a wharf or to the side of a vessel.
- boat-spade** : a short-handled spade with a sharp edge for cutting a hole in the whale through which a line is fastened for towing the whale to the ship.
- boom** : a spar holding the foot of a fore-and-aft sail.
- bow** : the forward part of a vessel.
- bowline** : a line having a sinker for fishing; a knot.
- bow-oar** : the second oar, next to the harpooner.
- bowsman** : the oarsman nearest the bow in the whaling boat.
- bowsprit** : a spar projecting forward and slightly upward from the bow of a vessel.
- braces** : the ropes fastened to the yard-arms and reaching the deck, to swing the yard for the wind and to hold it in place.
- breach** : a whale's leap out of the water.
- breaker** : a water-cask for a boat.
- brig** : a two-masted, square-rigged vessel.
- brit** : small crustaceans which float in beds near the surface of the water, the food of the right whale.
- bulkhead** : one of the various partitions in a vessel to separate it into desired rooms.



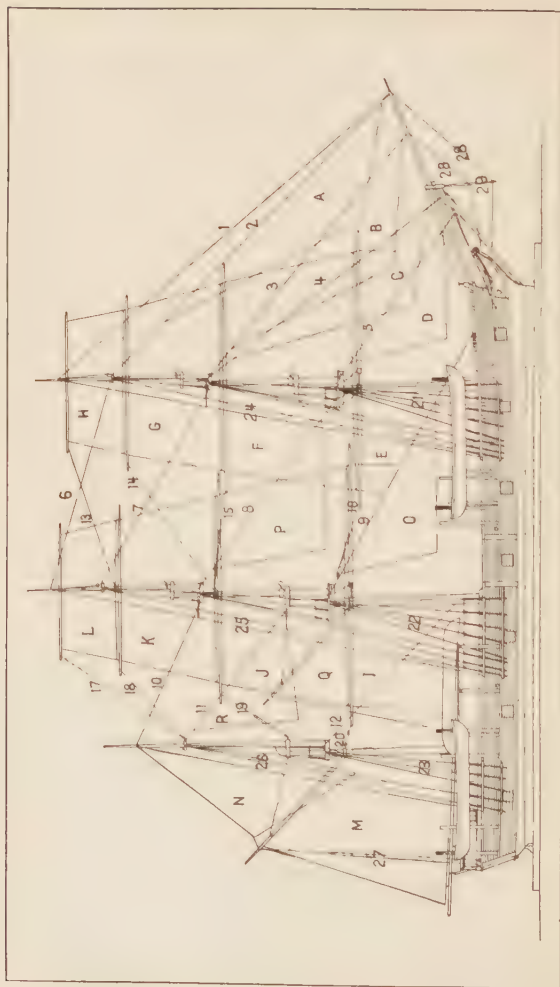


DIAGRAM OF THE STARBOARD SIDE OF THE LAGODA

A model of this whaler is in the Bourne Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts.



## SAILS

- |                           |  |                             |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| A. Outer jib.             |  |                             |
| B. Inner jib.             |  |                             |
| C. Fore topmast staysail. |  | M. Spanker.                 |
| D. Fore staysail.         |  | N. Mizzen gaff-topsail.     |
| E. Foresail.              |  | O. Main staysail.           |
| F. Fore topsail.          |  | P. Main topmast staysail.   |
|                           |  | Q. Spencer.                 |
|                           |  | R. Mizzen topmast staysail. |
| G. Fore topgallant sail.  |  |                             |
| H. Fore royal.            |  |                             |
| I. Mainsail.              |  |                             |
| J. Main topsail.          |  |                             |
| K. Main topgallant sail.  |  |                             |
| L. Main royal.            |  |                             |

## RIGGING

- |                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Fore royal stay.            |  | 21. Fore shrouds.                         |
| 2. Fore topgallant stay.       |  | 22. Main shrouds.                         |
| 3. Jib stay.                   |  | 23. Mizzen shrouds.                       |
| 4. Fore topmast stay.          |  | 24. Fore back braces.                     |
| 5. Fore stay.                  |  | 25. Main back braces.                     |
| 6. Main royal stay.            |  | 26. Mizzen back braces.                   |
| 7. Main topgallant stay.       |  | 27. Vangs (called bangs by sail-<br>ors). |
| 8. Main topmast stay.          |  | 28. Martingales.                          |
| 9. Main stay.                  |  | 29. Dolphin striker.                      |
| 10. Upper mizzen topmast stay. |  |   |
| 11. Mizzen topmast stay.       |  |   |
| 12. Mizzen stay.               |  |   |
| 13. Fore royal brace.          |  |   |
| 14. Fore topgallant brace.     |  |   |
| 15. Fore topmast brace.        |  |   |
| 16. Fore brace.                |  |   |
| 17. Main royal brace.          |  |   |
| 18. Main topgallant brace.     |  |   |
| 19. Main topmast brace.        |  |   |
| 20. Main brace.                |  |   |



- bulwarks** : the raised side of a vessel, above the upper deck, topped by the rail.
- buoy** : a floating object moored on a dangerous shoal as a guide to navigators; any device for keeping a person afloat in the water.
- Burtons** : a light hoisting-tackle usually attached to the topmast-head.
- butt** : a large cask.
- cannikin** : a small can or drinking cup.
- Cape Horn measure** : a large drink of spirits.
- capstan** : a windlass used principally for raising the anchor.
- capstan-head** : that part of the capstan containing the holes for turning it.
- careen** : the turning of a vessel to one side when sailing in a heavy wind, or when the cargo is shifted.
- case** : the upper half of a whale's forehead. It consists almost entirely of spermaceti, which is one third of the oil in a whale.
- cask** : a barrel used for storing the oil on a whaler.
- caulk** : to drive oakum into the seams of a ship to make them water-tight.
- caulking-iron** : iron chisel used in forcing the oakum into the seams of a ship.
- chief mate** : an officer ranking below the captain, also known as first mate.
- chock** : a groove in the stem of a whaleboat through which the whale line passes.
- close-reef** : to take in all the reefs of a sail.
- cockpit** : a space lower than the rest of the deck, and near the stern, by which the cabin is reached.
- combing sea** : waves curling over and breaking into foam.
- companionway** : the entrance to the stairs or ladder leading from one deck to another.
- compass** : an instrument for determining directions. It points approximately in the direction of the Magnetic Pole.
- cordage** : a general term for ropes and cords on a vessel.
- corpusants, corposants** : globular lights seen at night on the spars of a vessel, called St. Elmo's fire.



**crab** : a winch used for hauling a whale into shoal water at high tide.

**cranes** : hinged, triangular, wooden brackets which swing out from the side of a vessel and support the whaleboats.

**cross-trees** : pieces of wood or iron set athwartships at the top of a mast to hold the top or to extend the topgallant-shrouds.

**crow** : a crowbar.

**cutting in** : the process of removing the blubber from a whale.

**cutting-spade** : a wide, long-handled, chisel-shaped spade for cutting blubber.

**cutting-tackles** : large blocks and falls under the maintop and connected to the windlass for hoisting the blubber over the main hatch.

**Davy Jones** : a sailor's name for an evil sea spirit or the devil. The expression 'Davy Jones' locker' is applied to the ocean as the grave of drowned sailors.

**dead reckoning** : the determining of a vessel's position at sea without astronomical observations, solely by log distances and compass courses.

**dog-vane** : a small streamer of bunting, cork, and feathers placed on the weather gunwale to indicate the direction of the wind.

**dolphin** : a member of the whale family, with an average length of six to eight feet. The dolphin was sacred to Apollo.

**drawing water** : to settle in the water up to a certain point, as, 'the ship draws ten feet of water.'

**dreadnaught** : an outer coat made of heavy cloth.

**drugg** : a square block of wood attached to a whale line to mark and check a whale.

**duff** : a pudding of flour boiled in a bag.

**eye-splice** : a loop formed by bending back the end of a rope and splicing it into the rope.

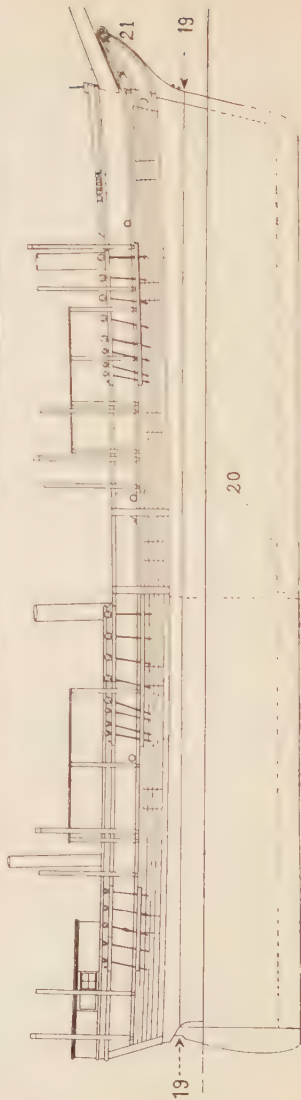
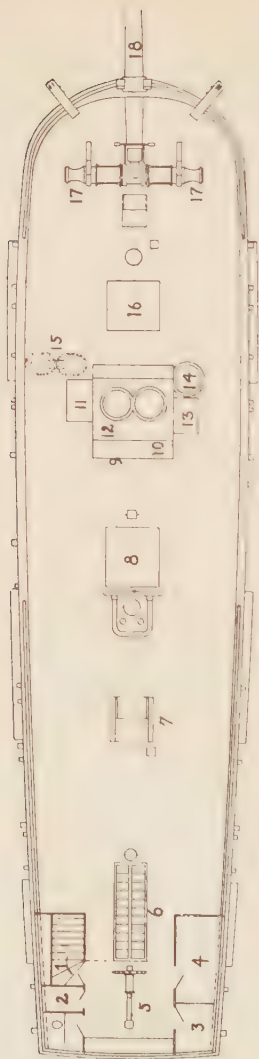
**fast-fish** : a live whale fast to a boat in tow.

**fast-line** : a line attached to a live whale.

**fathom** : a nautical measure of six feet.

**file-fish** : a fish named from its rough skin, which sailors sometimes use in place of sandpaper.





DIAGRAMS OF THE DECK AND STARBOARD SIDE OF THE LAGODA



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. To cabin.                                  | 12. Try-works.                                      |
| 2. Stores.                                    | 13. Cooler.   |
| 3. Stores.                                    | 14. Spare pot.                                      |
| 4. Galley.                                    | 15. Mincing machine (when in use).                  |
| 5. Helm.                                      | 16. Fore hatch.                                     |
| 6. Skylight to captain's cabin.               | 17. Windlass.                                       |
| 7. Steerage hatch.                            | 18. Bowsprit.                                       |
| 8. Main hatch.                                | 19. Upper edge of copper sheathing of hull.         |
| 9. Chicken coop and pig pen under work bench. | 20. Cross section of half the hull at middle point. |
| 10. Work bench.                               | 21. Rostrum.  |
| 11. Scrap pen.                                |   |



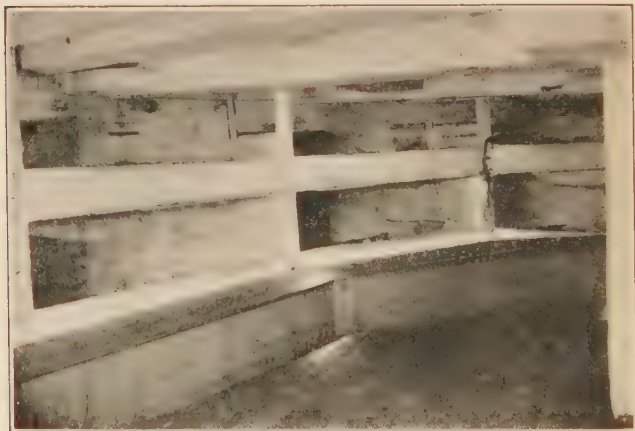
**finback** : the commonest variety of whale, with a high dorsal fin.

**flensing** : cutting in, a term used by old English whalers.

**fluke-chains** : the chains placed around the root of a whale's tail to hold him alongside the ship.

**flukes** : the horizontal tail of a whale.

**furry** : the dying struggle of a whale.



THE FORECASTLE IN THE *CHARLES W. MORGAN*

This section in the forepart of the ship is where the sailors slept and ate. Each sailor furnished his own bedding. The mattress, a burlap bag filled with straw and called the 'donkey's breakfast,' sold for a dollar.

**forecastle** : that part of a vessel that is forward of the foremast, the section occupied by the common sailors.

**foremast** : the mast nearest the bow of a vessel having more than one mast.

**furl** : to gather a sail into a roll and fasten it to a spar.

**gaff** : a hook with a short handle for dragging blubber about the deck.

**gallantmast** : the mast above the topmast.



- gallantsail** : the sail above the topsail.
- galley** : the ship's kitchen, usually located near the foremast.
- gallied** : frightened, probably from the obsolete verb *gallow*.
- gam** : a visit between officers and crews of whale ships at sea.
- grapnel** : a grappling-hook carried in a whaleboat for recovering a whale line.
- grego** : a rough overcoat.
- grog** : spirits served to sailors.
- gunwale** : the top of the rail along the outside of the boat or ship.
- gurry** : the slime and oil that cover the deck during the process of cutting in.
- halyards** : ropes used for hoisting sails or flags.
- hamstring** : to cut the fluke tendons at the root of a whale's tail in order to prevent the whale's escape.
- handspike** : a bar used as a lever in lifting heavy objects.
- harpoon** : an iron or steel implement with a barbed head, used in fastening to a whale.
- harpooneer** : the boat-steerer who harpoons the whale. He pulls the forward oar in the boat. Whalemen say harpooneer, never harpooner.
- hatch** : an opening in the deck for passage to the hold of the vessel.
- hawser** : a large rope used for towing and for making fast to moorings.
- heave the log** : to determine a ship's speed by means of the log. (See *log*.)
- heave to** : to bring a vessel to a standstill.
- helm** : the apparatus by which a vessel is steered, consisting of rudder, tiller, and wheel.
- hogshead** : a large cask or barrel having a capacity of from one hundred to one hundred and forty gallons.
- hold** : that part of a vessel below the deck where the cargo is stored.
- horse-pieces** : pieces of blubber about six feet long and several feet wide.
- hull** : the body of a vessel, exclusive of masts, sails, and rigging.
- hunks** : a term used by the sailors in referring to large pieces of blubber.



**jet** : a spouting or gushing flow.

**jib** : one of the triangular head sails of a sailing vessel.

**jib-boom** : a spar forming a continuation of the bowsprit.

**junk** : the wedge-shaped, lower half of a sperm whale's forehead, composed of about equal parts of oil and meat. As there is no blood in this part, the meat is white. Sailors refer to it as 'white horse.'

**jury-mast** : a temporary mast.

**keel** : the lowest, lengthwise part of the frame of a vessel.

**kelson** : a beam extending lengthwise above the keel to strengthen it.

**lamp-feeder** : oil can.

**lance** : a sharp, steel implement for killing a whale.

**lanyard** : a small rope used on a vessel.

**larboard** : the old term for port, or the left hand side of a vessel. It is no longer used because of its close resemblance to *starboard*, which means the right-hand side.

**lay** : a whaleman's share of the profits of the voyage. (See page 456.)

**lead** : a mass of lead on the lead-line.

**lead-line** : a line for taking soundings to determine the depth of the water.

**league** : a measure of distance. A marine league is equal to three geographic miles, or one twentieth of a degree.

**lee** : pertaining to the side toward which the wind blows.

**leeward** : in the direction toward which the wind blows, opposed to windward.

**life** (of a whale) : the vulnerable spot, usually the lungs.

**line tub** : a large, shallow tub in the whaleboat in which the whale line is coiled.

**log** : an instrument for determining the speed of a vessel. Consult any unabridged dictionary for detailed explanation and picture.

**loggerhead** : the wooden projection in the stern of a whaleboat around which the whale line is wound.

**lookout** : a sailor stationed in a masthead to watch for whales.



**lubber's hole** : an opening in the floor of a platform attached to a mast through which a sailor can pass when going aloft without climbing over the edge.

**luff** : to steer closer to the wind.

**lugger** : a small two- or three-masted boat with square sails, and usually several jibs.

**main** : a term applied alike to the principal mast and to the principal sail of a vessel.

**main-truck** : a wooden disk at the top of the mainmast, having holes through which signal-halyards are passed.

**main-yard** : the lower yard on the mainmast.

**man-ropes** : ropes serving as hand railings, as at a gangway.

**marling spike** : a long, tapered iron for opening strands when splicing rope.

**mate** : an officer ranking below a captain.

**merchantman** : a trading vessel.

**midships** : the middle part of a vessel.

**mid-watch** : the middle watch.

**mincer** : a sailor who cuts the blubber into thin slices.

**mincing knife** : a knife with a handle at each end, used for slicing blubber.

**mizzenmast** : generally the third mast from the bow of a vessel carrying three or more masts.

**monkey jacket** : a short coat.

**monkey-rope** : a rope tied to a man who is sent down to work on a whale alongside the ship.

**narwhal**, also **narwhale** : a member of the whale family found in the Arctic. It attains a length of about twenty feet and is valued for its ivory and oil.

**nipper** : a padded piece of canvas about eight inches square to protect the boat-steerer's hand while throwing out a whale line. (See also page 291.)

**oakum** : remnants of old rope used for calking the seams of a vessel.

**offing** : that part of the visible sea distant from the shore, beyond anchorage ground, or where there is deep water.



- parmacetti** : old form of *spermaceti*. (See *spermaceti*.)
- pea-jacket** : a coat of thick, closely-woven cloth worn by sailors in rough weather.
- peak** : to place the handles of the oars in cleats when the boat is fast to a whale.
- pike** : an implement with a single prong for pushing the blubber around the deck.
- pilot** : a man qualified and licensed by law to conduct vessels in and out of port.
- pilot cloth** : a coarse, stout, woolen cloth, usually blue, used for sailors' clothing.
- pitchpoling** : hurling a harpoon a long distance by throwing it upward and causing it to make a large arc before striking.
- plummet** : a piece of lead for making soundings.
- pod** : a herd.
- point** : one of the thirty two divisions of the compass, or the angle between two adjacent divisions. It is equal to  $11\frac{1}{4}$  degrees.
- poop** : an extra deck on the after part of a vessel.
- porpoise** : a member of the whale family frequenting North Atlantic waters. It is about five feet long.
- port** : the left side of a vessel as one faces the bow. (See *larboard*.)
- port-holes** : small openings in the side of a vessel for the admission of air and light.
- preventer tackles** : tackles in the main rigging to which the running rigging is fastened while cutting in.
- privateer** : a vessel owned and commanded by private persons, but engaged in warfare under a government commission.
- prow** : the forepart of a vessel's hull, particularly the stem. (See *stem*.)
- quadrant** : an instrument for measuring the altitude of the sun.
- quarter** : the section of the side of a vessel just forward of the stern.
- quarter-boat** : a boat swung from davits on a vessel's quarter.
- quarter-deck** : that part of the deck between the poop and the mainmast for the use of the officers.
- quoin** : a wedge-shaped support for a mast. (See also page 248.)



**rail** : the railing which caps the bulwarks.

**reef** : to reduce the extent of sail by folding and tying it to a yard or a boom.

**reeve** : to pass, as a rope, through a ring or a hole.

**rib** : a curved side-timber which bends away from the keel.

**rigger** : one who fits the riggings of a vessel.

**rigging** : the ropes on a vessel by which her masts and sails are supported and operated.

**right whale** : the whalebone whale.

**ringbolts** : an eyebolt having a ring attached.

**rope-yarn** : several fibers of hemp twisted together forming one of the lesser strands of which a strand of rope is composed.

**rostrum** : the figurehead or 'beak' at the prow of a ship.

**round house** : a cabin on the after part of a vessel's quarter-deck, surmounted by the poop.

**royalmast** : the fourth section of a mast above deck.

**saw-fish** : a long fish, sometimes twenty feet in length, having a snout in the form of a long, flat blade with socketed, horizontal teeth for tearing its prey.

**scarf** : the line made around the whale by spades when cutting in.

**school** : a herd.

**schooner** : a fore-and-aft rigged vessel with two or more masts.

**scuppers** : openings in the bulwarks of a vessel to carry off any water from the deck.

**scuttle** : a small opening with a movable lid in the side or the bottom of a ship.

**seizing** : the process of fastening by turns of rope, or the fastening so made.

**shark** : a large fish, often forty feet long, abundant in the tropics, having a tough, dull gray, spotted skin.

**shrouds** : strong ropes which form the lateral supports of a mast.

**skrimshander** : pictorial, decorative articles made from the bone or the teeth of the sperm whale by sailors when off duty.

**skysail** : a small sail sometimes placed above the royal in a square-rigged vessel.

**slobgollion**, also **slumgullion** : refuse from spermaceti.

**small** : the slender part of the whale's body where it joins the tail.



**sog** : stupor.

**sogger** : to shirk.

**sounding** : measurement of the water with the line and lead.

**spar** : a pole on which a sail is extended.

**spermaceti** : the substance in the case (*q.v.*) in the head of a sperm whale.

**sperm oil** : oil from a sperm whale.

**sperm whale** : the large toothed whale of the temperate and tropic waters.

**spile** : a plug or wooden pin.

**spiracle** : the spout hole of a whale.

**spoke** : one of the radial handles of the steering-wheel.

**spout** : the visible breath of a whale.

**squaresail** : a four-cornered sail on a fore-and-aft rigged vessel.

**square the yards** : to haul in the braces so that the yards are square across the hull of the vessel.

**squid** : a fish with sucker-bearing arms which are used for seizing its prey.

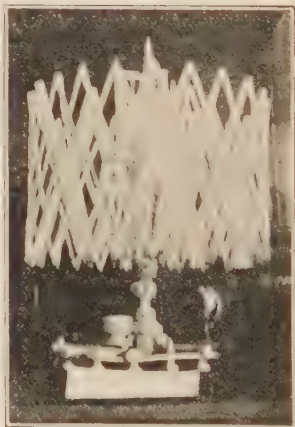
**stage** : a platform that is lowered at the side of the ship during the process of cutting in a whale.

**stand by** : to keep near and be ready to execute an order.

**starboard** : the right hand side of a vessel as one faces the bow.

**state-room** : an officer's cabin.

**stem** : a timber, usually curved, attached to the front end of the keel and forming the base of the bowsprit.



YARN REEL OR 'SWIFT'

This 'swift,' now in the Bourne Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts, was made by Captain Jirah Sherman, Jr., for his wife while on a voyage in the *Gideon Howland*, 1835-1838. It is constructed of whale's teeth and bone and six hundred and fifty pieces of silver.



- stem-piece** : an independent, upright timber attached in front of the stem and under the bowsprit.
- stoker** : the man who feeds the fire under the try-pots.
- stove boat** : a boat that has been damaged in an encounter with a whale.
- stunsail** : a sail attached to the stem of a vessel.
- sword-fish** : an edible, marine fish about fifteen feet in length with an upper jaw extending to form an elongated sword which is used in attacking other fish.
- tackle** : a mechanical contrivance for obtaining a hold upon anything in order to move it.
- taffrail** : the rail at the stern of a vessel.
- tarpaulin** : a sailor's tarred or oiled cloth hat; a canvas for covering hatches or the try-works.
- thole-pins** : wooden pins inserted vertically in the gunwale of a boat to serve as a fulcrum for an oar in rowing. In the whaleboat these pins were wound with cord to deaden the noise made by the oars when near the whale.
- thwart** : an oarsman's seat extending from side to side in an open boat.
- tide-rip** : water roughened by conflicting currents.
- tierce** : a cask used for packing salt provisions.
- tiller** : the handle at the top of the shaft to which the rudder is attached.
- timberhead** : an upwardly projecting end of a beam for attaching lines above deck.
- top** : the platform on the mast just below the topsails.
- topgallant** : the mast, sail, yard, or rigging immediately above the topmast.
- topmast** : the mast next above the lower mast.
- transom** : a seat or berth in a cabin with drawers beneath.
- trick** : the time allotted to a sailor to be at the wheel or on any duty.
- trim the yards** : to adjust the yards so as to present the most favorable angle to the wind.
- trucks** : wooden disks at the top of the skysail-pole, having holes through which halyards are passed.



- try-pots** : large iron pots on the forward deck for boiling the oil out of the blubber.
- trysails** : small sails used in stormy weather when no others can be carried.
- try-watch** : the time a sailor was assigned to work at the try-works, six hours. Other watches were usually four hours.
- try-works** : brick ovens with try-pots for rendering the oil. They were built on the forward deck and taken down after the last blubber was tried out.
- turning flukes** : an expression used among sailors for going to bed.
- waif** : a small flag on a pointed staff about six feet long which was used to mark a dead whale so that he could be readily located.
- waist** : the part of a vessel between the beam and the quarter.
- wake** : the track left by a vessel passing through the water.
- wall butts** : casks between decks for fresh water.
- walrus** : a large, marine, seal-like mammal of the North Pacific. Its hide, blubber, and ivory are valuable.
- watch** : duty assigned a sailor for a given time, usually four hours.
- watch-coat** : a heavy coat worn by watch officers in rough weather.
- whale-boat** : the boat used in the pursuit of whales.
- whale-line** : the rope to which the harpoon is attached. It is a fiber manila rope about two thirds of an inch in diameter.
- whale-pike** : an iron with a curved point and a wooden handle about four feet long, used for handling blubber on board the ship.
- whaling-spade** : the whaling spade used for cutting in is made of the very best steel; is about the bigness of a man's spread hand; and in general shape, corresponds to the garden implement after which it is named; only its sides are perfectly flat, and its upper end considerably narrower than the lower. This weapon is always kept as sharp as possible; and when being used is occasionally honed, just like a razor. In its socket, a stiff pole, from twenty to thirty feet long, is inserted for a handle. (Melville's definition)
- white-ash breeze** : the use of white ash (meaning oars) in propelling a boat.



**white-horse** : the white, bloodless meat in the forehead of the sperm whale.

**windlass** : a horizontal drum for winding or hoisting by winding.

**windward** : the side of a vessel upon which the wind is blowing is the windward side.

**wrapall** : a heavy coat for stormy weather.

**yard-arm** : the end of a spar.

**yards** : the spars suspended from masts for the purpose of spreading the sails.

**yaw** : to change from the true course.



































